

McGhee

49

THE TURKS.



Commander Cameron



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PART OF THE CARAVAN

AMONG THE TURKS

BY

VERNEY LOVETT CAMERON, C.B., D.C.L.,
Commander Royal Navy



A BAZAAR IN BAGHDAD

Page 206.

THOMAS NELSON AND SONS
London and Edinburgh.

AMONG THE TURKS

BY

VERNEY LOVETT CAMERON, C.B., D.C.L.,

COMMANDER ROYAL NAVY;

AUTHOR OF "JACK HOOPER," "IN SAVAGE AFRICA,"

"OUR FUTURE HIGHWAY,"

ETC. ETC.

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AMONG THE TURKS.

CHAPTER I.

OFF TO THE LEVANT.

MY father was a ship-chandler in Wapping. Though he was considered a worthy man and well stocked with this world's gear, still no one would have ventured to predict that one of his sons would ever attain the position I now occupy as captain and master of the *Essex*, a fifty-gun ship, belonging to the Honourable East India Company. As at times in my voyages, when crossing the trades or running with a favouring monsoon, I have intervals of leisure, I will endeavour to give an account of the voyage in which I fell into the hands of the Turks, and of my experiences among them.

My father, John Hobbes, was, as I have said, a ship-chandler in Wapping. His shop was situated in the High Street of that busy and thriving town. Over the door swung a picture of a full-rigged ship, under which

was painted her name, the *Happy Return*, in letters nearly a foot long. The place was well known to skippers, mates, and supercargoes, who knew that here they would be sure of a good pennyworth, honest civility, and careful attention.

My father early in life married Anne, the daughter of his neighbour Isaac Crooks, cordwainer, who was specially skilful in making boots suitable for mariners, and for which he had a great reputation. They had four daughters and three sons, besides the writer of this narrative.

I was born in the year 1700, and was the youngest of the family. My father's substance having greatly increased as years had rolled on, I enjoyed a somewhat better education than my brothers; which has enabled me to attain the high position which I now occupy. My name, William, had been given me by my sponsor, William Shaw, a master mariner, who commanded a vessel engaged in the Smyrna trade. From his discourse when, in the intervals between his voyages, he at times partook of supper, and perchance enjoyed a pipe of Virginia, in the living-room behind the shop, where many sea-faring men were wont to resort, my first ideas of becoming a sailor were derived.

My mother long and strenuously opposed the thought of my going to sea; but seeing my heart was bent upon it, she at last consented to my being bound apprentice to my godfather, who was master of the ship *Golden Hind*, and who generously made me a present of my

articles. In the *Golden Hind* I made four voyages to the Levant; and then my godfather said it would be well for me to sail in some other ship. I had not only become a practical seaman, but had also learned much of the art of navigation, being able to work a reckoning, and even to take the altitude of the sun with sufficient accuracy to find my latitude within five miles. He obtained for me the post of fourth mate on board the ship *Antelope*, commanded by Joseph Tomkins, master mariner, an old friend of Mr. Shaw, and like him engaged in the Levant trade.

The *Antelope* was laden with an assorted cargo, part of which we were to discharge at Alexandretta or Iskanderun, for the factory of the Company of Turkey Merchants at Aleppo, and the remainder was consigned to their factory at Smyrna. The other officers of the *Antelope* were—Samuel Jackson, first mate; Job Harris, second mate; and John Smith, third mate. The gunner was one Stephen Linstock; while the responsible posts of carpenter and boatswain were filled by Jared Stokes and Matthew Barnes respectively. My mates were all honest seamen; and though they could not profess so intimate a knowledge of the noble art of navigation as I, they could handle a ship under all circumstances of wind and weather, and veer, tack, or, if need were, club-haul a ship as well as any man sailing from the port of London.

The *Antelope* herself was a vessel of which any seaman might have been proud, being of the astonishing

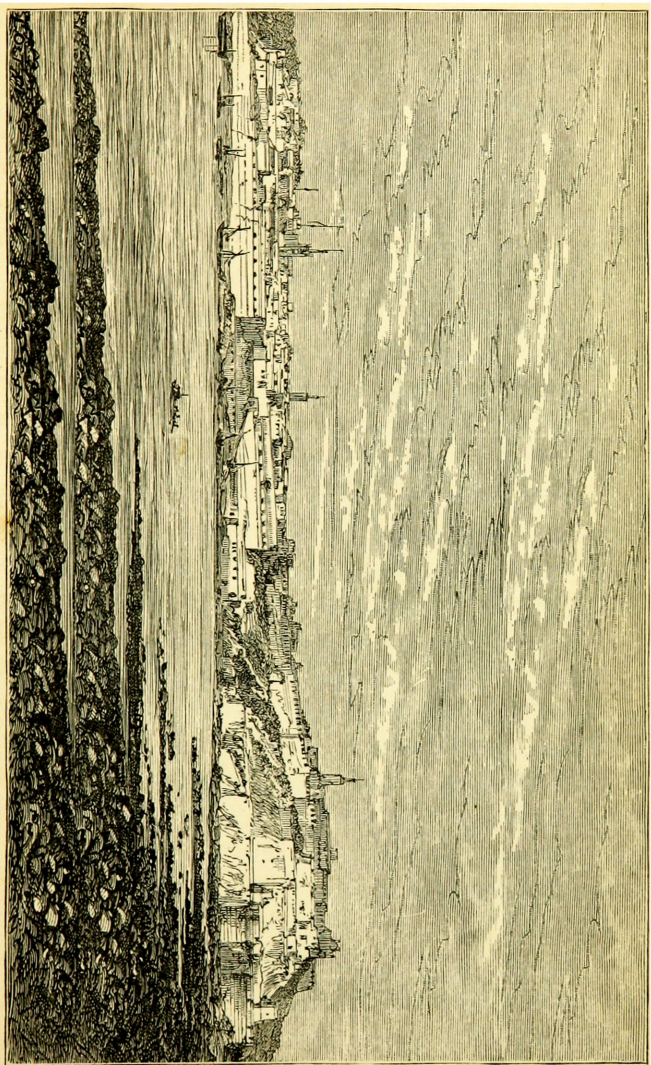
burden of four hundred and twenty tons. Her crew numbered a hundred and twenty-seven men and boys all told, and well armed, so that if we met with a casual foe we might be expected to give a good account of ourselves; though, till after we had arrived at Algiers, we were to sail under the convoy of some of the king's ships.

Just the day before that on which we were to sail, the supercargo, who was to have come with us on behalf of the Company of Turkey Merchants, fell sick. No suitable person being readily available to replace him, my godfather made interest that I should be appointed to fill the vacant post.

That night I bade good-bye to my father and mother and the rest of the family, and went on board the *Antelope*. She was in all respects ready for sea—sails bent, cargo stowed, and hatches closed—and riding at single anchor in Limehouse Pool, in order to tide down the river with the morning's ebb as far as Gravesend.

At Gravesend we received orders to repair to the Nore, where Sir John Lawson was lying with the ships *Royal Charles*, *Henry*, *Swiftsure*, and *Gloucester*, besides smaller craft. A large fleet of merchantmen had already assembled; and it was with no small pride I saw that the *Antelope* was the most proper ship of them all, and that from our lofty poop and top-gallant forecastle we could look down upon all our consorts save only the larger men-of-war.

At the Nore we lay for several days awaiting the



TANGIER FROM THE SEA.

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arrival of ships from Harwich, Hull, and other northern ports. At length the signal for sailing was given, the fleet weighed, and, after some little delay and confusion, got into the order prescribed by the admiral.

We expected to anchor in the Downs, but at Deal a galley boarded the flag-ship, bringing despatches and orders from the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, so we held on our way, not knowing what they might contain, until we reached St. Helens. There some more ships had collected, and the men-of-war were reinforced by the *Dragon*, *Talbot*, and others whose names I now forget, but which brought the numbers up to ten heavy ships, besides sloops and fire-vessels. Whilst here it became known that our admiral had received orders to treat with the Dey of Algiers for the release of Christian prisoners, and to obtain from him a promise that his captains should not molest English vessels sailing in the Mediterranean.

After two days at St. Helens, we again weighed, and sailed down the Channel with a favourable wind. Off Plymouth and Falmouth we picked up other ships which wished to avail themselves of the protection of Sir John Lawson's fleet, among them being some transports carrying troops and stores for the king's garrison at Tangier.

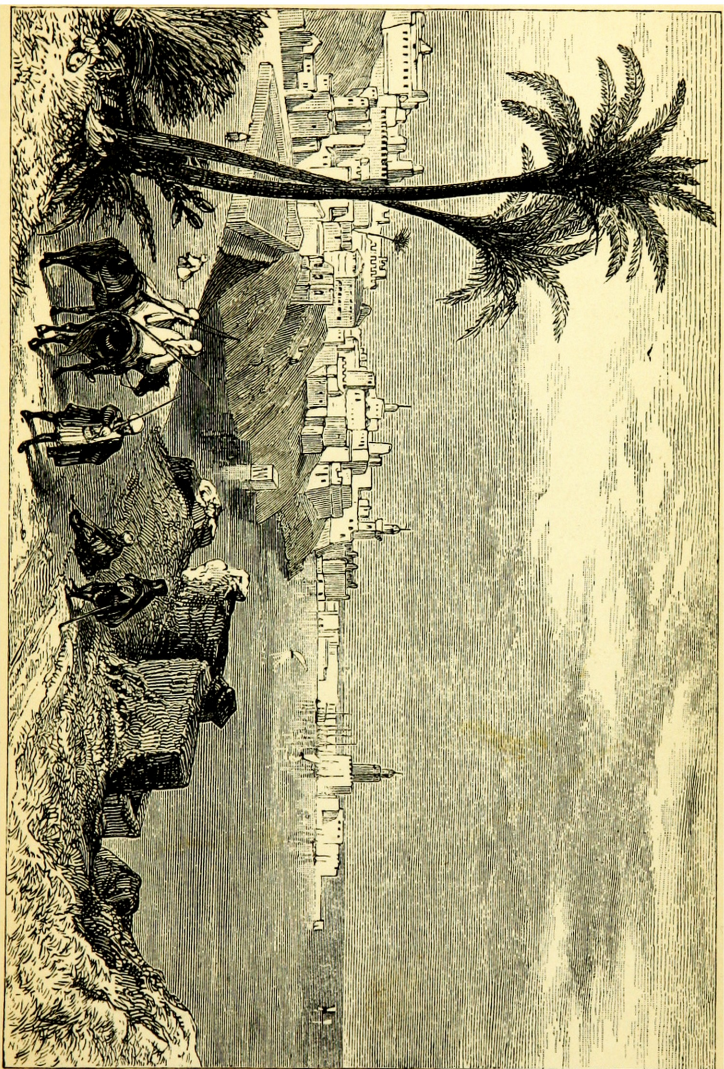
Our voyage to that place was void of incident or interest; some ships belonging to the Royal African Company, bound for the coast of Guinea, parting from us a couple of days before we arrived, as had some

others earlier in the voyage that were bound for Lisbon.

Off Tangier the fleet and convoy, with the exception of the transports carrying the troops and supplies for the garrison, only lay to, and did not anchor, while the admiral went on shore to communicate with the governor of the place, and learn from him the latest news of the doings of the Turks at Algiers.

On the admiral coming on board again, we made sail to work our way against an easterly wind by aid of the current which is ever flowing into the Mediterranean. We had ample opportunity of admiring the huge bulk of Atlas, whose summit is constantly clothed with clouds; also of remarking how the rocky headlands of Gibraltar and Ceuta stand like twin sentinels to guard the passage of the strait.

A favourable wind springing up, we soon arrived off Algiers, and Sir John Lawson and his fleet anchored outside the mole, inside which lay the dreaded Algerine corsairs, all of them well equipped, and many commanded by Christian renegadoes.



ALGIERS.

CHAPTER II.

IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

AT Algiers we Levant traders and the other merchant vessels parted from our convoy. Though, for mutual support, we kept together, it was not long before—just after we had passed the island of Galita—we encountered a furious gale, which dispersed us, and in which, I fear, many of our companions were wrecked and lost.

When we were first assailed by this tempest, Mr. Tomkins made all things secure, and would have run before it, trusting that it was only a fierce gale that would soon blow itself out. But the waves rose so high and steep, and with such rapidity, that to pursue that course, it was evident, would be only to court destruction. We therefore, with great difficulty, furlled the fore-sail under which we had been endeavouring to keep before the wind, and sought to bring the ship to the wind to try under a mizzen-stay-sail.

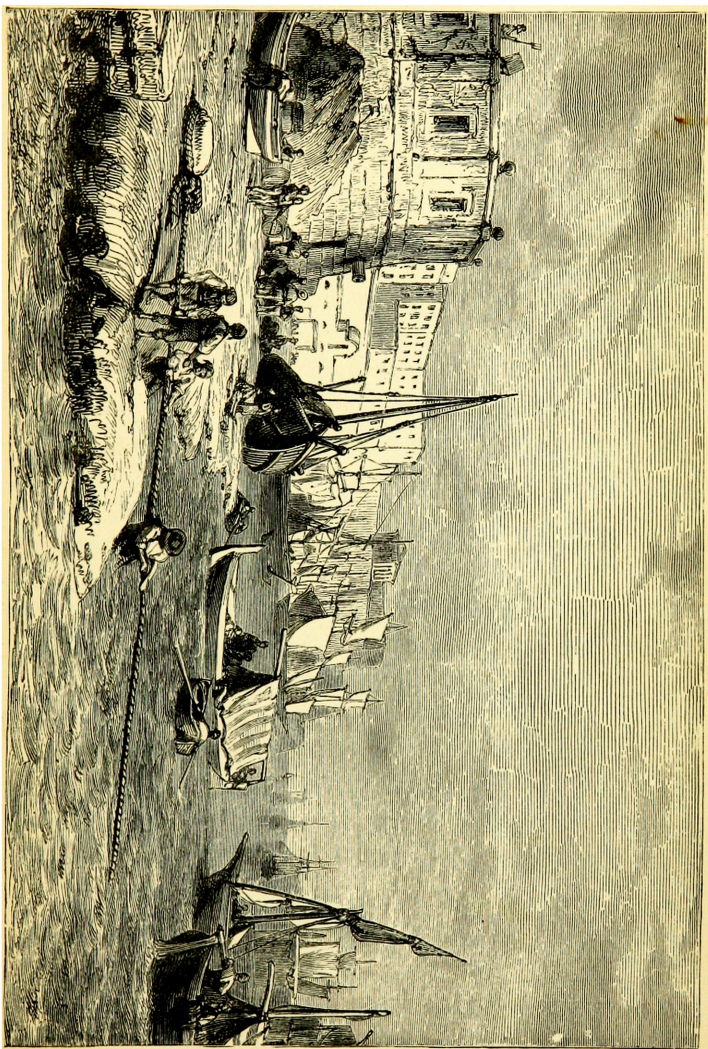
To do this, Mr. Tomkins, as became a careful mariner, chose a moment when there was an apparent lull in

the fury of the gale. But the *Antelope* was so assailed by the waves, that she answered her helm indifferently, and while in the act of rounding to, she was beaten down on her beam-ends, the seas making a clean breach over her amidships.

I was standing near the weather-fore-rigging, and managed to secure myself from being washed overboard, as was the unlucky fate of some of my shipmates. The *Antelope* lay so long in the trough of the sea that I thought she would never right herself, and I began to compass in my mind if I could win my way into the fore-channels and cut away the lanyards of the fore-rigging, so that, relieved of the weight of the fore-mast, she might have some chance of recovering herself. I was about to attempt this when I heard a terrible creaking and rending, and the ship righted herself with a leap that sent everything flying to windward.

As soon as I could look around, I saw that we now had the sea on the starboard bow; that the fore and maintop masts were hanging over the side; and that the jibboom and sprit-sail yard, with all their gear, had been carried away. I heard Mr. Tomkins shout through his trumpet to clear away the wreckage; and, seizing an axe, I sprang into the fore-rigging, calling to some men near me to follow, and made my way up to the foretop as well as I could, though this was no easy undertaking.

The wind seemed to pin me against the shrouds,



GRAND HARBOUR. MALTA.

which, as the stout craft rolled to windward, hung slack, and anon, as she rolled down to leeward, suddenly became as taut as harp-strings. But our safety depended upon our getting clear of the wreckage, which was bumping against the side of the ship, and threatening to knock a hole in her, or perchance start a butt; so I persevered, and after some hard and dangerous work, in which I was ably seconded by some of the seamen, I managed to cut away all the top-mast rigging. Then coming down to the forecabin, we assisted Samuel Jackson in cutting the ropes which still held the wreckage, and we soon had the unspeakable relief of seeing the broken spars which had threatened our safety drifting away from us. The men in the after part of the ship had been equally successful with ourselves.

We had now a little time to look about us. Linstock and his crew went round to see after the safety of the guns; while the carpenter, Jared Stokes, looked to the security of our ports and hatches, and sounded the well. I went aft to Mr. Tomkins to inquire if he had any directions to give, and he desired me to find out how many of the crew were missing. "When that same furious wave had beat us down on our beam-ends," he said, "and had gone nigh to sending us all to Davy Jones's locker, I was sure that some poor fellows had gone there."

I soon found that his fears were only too well founded. No fewer than seven of our shipmates had

found a watery grave, among them being the boatswain and the third mate, while several had received severe hurts and bruises, one poor fellow having had his foot crushed in a most singular manner. As the ship went over, the guns on the lee side had been lifted off the deck,* and this man had slid down under one; and when she righted, he had been jammed between the carriage and the deck, and had had to be released by men with handspikes. Those who at the time were below in their hammocks had been awakened by being knocked against the beams; and when the ship righted they found a turn in their clews, as if she had turned right over, and, indeed, some of the younger hands could not be persuaded that this had not been the case.

As soon as we were clear of the wreckage, and had made the ship as secure as the wind and sea would permit, we had nothing to do but to wait for the abatement of the gale, which continued for other two days.

On the third day we were running with a favouring wind for Malta, where we soon arrived, and were towed to moorings in the Grand Harbour by a crowd of gayly-painted boats. From the resources of the Knights of St. John all our damages were in a very short time made good.

We set sail from Malta with the intention of proceeding direct to Alexandretta. We had on board as passengers two Turks of Aleppo, who, having been taken prisoners by the Knights, and having purchased

* This actually happened on board a ship in which I served.



THE GREEK CORSAIR.

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their liberty, were glad to avail themselves of the opportunity afforded by our being bound for Alexandretta to return to their homes.

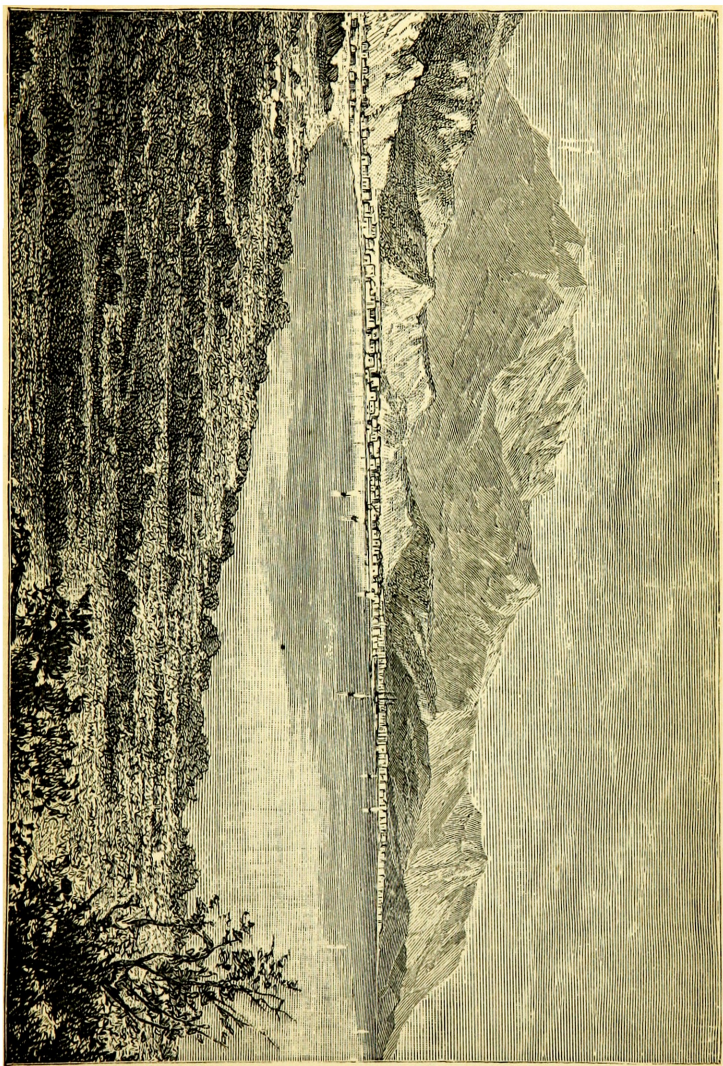
One was a very old, white-headed man, named Abdul Akbar. In consideration of the promise of a handsome payment, I gave up my cabin to him and his companion. Having once or twice chastised some of the seamen who mocked at his devotions, which he was very precise in performing, after the manner of his people, he took a great liking for me, and promised that, if it ever lay in his power to make me a return, he would do all he could for me. The other Turk was a younger man, named Osman Oglou. He was very taciturn and grave, and was apparently a servant or retainer of the old man; but I could not help noticing that he was often treated by him with great respect and deference, and I suspected that he was more important than his somewhat mean habit and carriage would warrant.

Our voyage to Alexandretta was marked by no incident worthy of note, save that shortly before we sighted Ras el-Khanzir we were chased by a Greek corsair, which, however, as we got into the Gulf of Alexandretta, hauled off for fear of meeting with any of the vessels of the Grand Seignior at anchor off the town.

Our papers having been examined, and found in proper order, we had no difficulty in passing our goods through the custom-house.

While I was at the factory, I received a message from

our two passengers, who were preparing to start over the Beilan pass on their way to Aleppo, requesting me to go and see them. I found that in return for the use of my cabin, and the civility I had shown them, they had, besides the payment they had promised me, prepared a most handsome present of Broussa silks and other valuable articles of merchandise for my acceptance, which were sent to the factory for me.



GULF OF ALEXANDRETTA.

CHAPTER III.

CAST AWAY.

I WISH I could write that the remainder of our voyage was equally profitable, but that is not possible; for now commenced a series of misfortunes and disasters such as have rarely fallen to the lot of seafaring men.

The town of Alexandretta is at all times notorious for its unhealthiness; the swamps which border upon the sea make it a very hot-bed of fever and ague: and whilst we were there, an epidemic of spotted fever broke out, of which Captain Tomkins, the first and second mates, and many of our foremast hands died. The command devolving on me, I made shift to put to sea, fearing that if we lay longer in this unhealthy spot, I should not have enough men left to navigate the ship with safety.

I myself indeed had not escaped scot-free, and the labour and responsibility of navigating so valuable a ship as the *Antelope* told heavily on me. The sickness among our crew continuing, we were sore put to it to manage the sails and rigging, even in fair weather;

and a fierce storm coming on us, we lost several of our spars and sails before we could secure them. The ship soon became unmanageable, and we could do nothing but let her drive before the wind. About two o'clock one morning we were alarmed by the cry of the look-out that there were breakers ahead. I endeavoured to bring the ship by the wind, but soon found we were making so much leeway that there was no hope of weathering the rocks on the tack we were on. I resolved, therefore, if any bottom could be found, to try to get her on the other tack by club-hauling.

With the hand-lead we could get no bottom, so a cast was tried with the deep-sea lead. Finding that we had thirty-two fathoms of water, I gave orders to clear away the small bower anchor, put the helm hard down, and haul down the fore-staysail. I thought the masts would have come out of the ship as we came head to wind; but we would doubtless have succeeded in the manœuvre, if the men stationed to cut the cable had not done so before I gave the order.

We instantly began to drift towards the rocks with frightful speed. I ordered all the sheets and halliards to be let fly, and the best bower and sheet anchors to be let go, and then tried to cut away the remnants of the sails, which were beating themselves to shreds. At first the anchors held; but after a time the ship began to drag, and in the hope of saving her we cut away the masts. This fortunately proved sufficient, and we held on till daylight, which showed us



IN THE STORM.

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to be indeed in a desperate position. On our larboard was a rocky headland on which the waves were beating furiously, whilst astern of us was a reef of rocks that reached away nearly to our starboard beam; so that, had we been successful in tacking about, it was doubtful if we could have weathered them.

The ship's company, who up to this time had behaved themselves bravely and orderly, now lost all heart. Some of them broke open the spirit-room, saying that if they were to be drowned, they would as soon be drowned drunk as sober; others went to their bunks and berths and turned in; while others again dressed themselves in their best clothes. Indeed, there was no vagary nor extravagance into which the fear of death did not drive them. Knowing that these Levant gales were often as short-lived as they were furious, I endeavoured to maintain some order among the crew; but all the bonds of discipline were broken, and I might as well have spoken to deaf men.

The seas were now making a clean breach over us, and I feared that, even if the anchors held, we might founder; but all my prayers and entreaties were unavailing to persuade the crew to man the pumps and free the vessel from the water she had shipped.

As I could not instil reason into any of my companions, I began to provide for my own safety. Cutting a hencoop away from its lashings on the poop, and stripping myself to my shirt and drawers, I determined, if the ship should founder, to trust to this frail support

to make my way through the breakers. I had scarcely finished my preparations when some of those who had drowned their wits in drink came aft and commenced abusing me for having brought them into their present dangerous condition. With them argument was useless, and presently from words they proceeded to acts. Seizing a handspike, I managed to lay some of them on the deck; but they ultimately prevailed against me, and, saying that I was a Jonah, threw me overboard into the raging sea. But some of them, less barbarous than the rest, pitched the hencoop after me. With infinite toil and trouble I managed to gain that ark of safety; and being, by the mercy of God, driven on it through an opening in the rocks, I was washed upon the shore without hurt, save a few bruises.

I was now indeed in a forlorn state—on an island of which I knew not the name; with no clothing but my shirt and drawers, which had been so damaged in my struggle with the mutineers and my voyage on the hencoop that they now scarce served the necessities of decency; without hat or shoe; penniless, and not knowing whither to turn my steps for food, shelter, or assistance.

The storm having by this time somewhat abated, I made my way to the top of a neighbouring hillock to watch what might become of the *Antelope* and my late shipmates. I soon saw that the worst of the storm was over; it being, as I had supposed, like most levanters, furious while it lasted, but short in duration.

There was every hope, therefore, that the anchors would hold; and I began to cast about in my mind how I might get on board again, and, trusting to the crew having returned to their right mind, rig jury-masts and proceed on our voyage to Smyrna. But even as I was looking, some of the foolish fellows commenced to fire guns, which could not fail to attract the attention of the thieves who infest the Archipelago. The quarter-boats having been washed away, others endeavoured to launch the long-boat from the skids, but stove her in so doing.

As if these misfortunes were not enough, they—I supposed, in their drunken madness, routing about in the hold and searching for more liquor—managed to set the ship on fire, and presently a column of smoke burst from her main-hatchway. Some of the poor wretches then set to work to form a raft on which they might make their way to the shore.

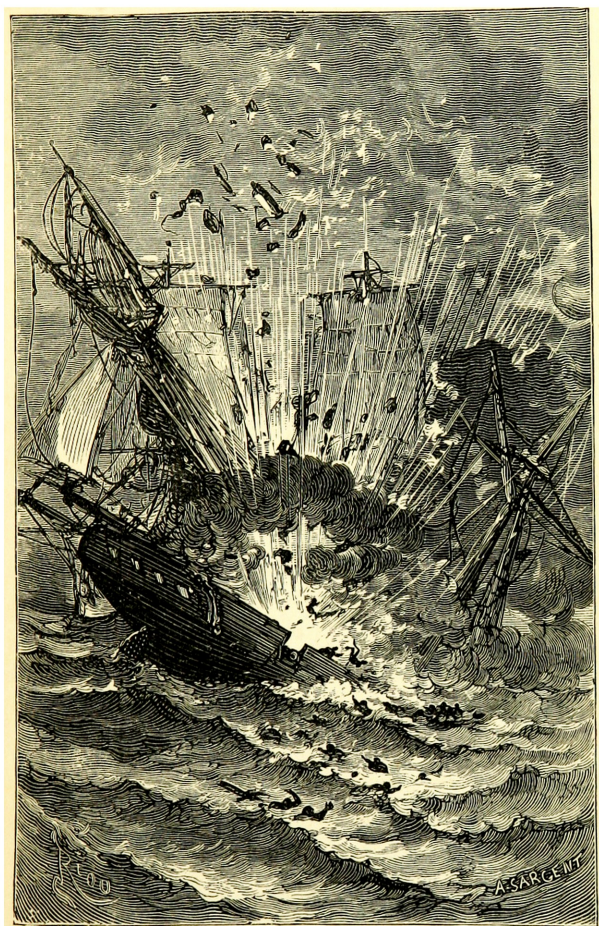
I hastened to the beach to try to direct the men on this raft, if they should succeed in quitting the ship, to the passage through which I had been driven. But, as I had feared, the noise of the guns had brought others on the scene; and a scampavia, one of the craft used by the Greeks and Venetians instead of galleys, came from behind a small headland where, doubtless, she had found shelter from the storm, and under sails and oars made her way to the burning ship.

The scampavia anchored a short distance from the *Antelope*, and, launching a small boat, her crew addressed

themselves to the task of saving what they could of the cargo. The raft was now abandoned, and I could make out that all the *Antelope's* men, fearing the flames more than the sea, were casting themselves into the water, and endeavouring to make their way to the new-comer, which I hoped might prove to be an honest craft, though of that I had my doubts.

The fire on board the *Antelope* made great headway. Soon flames burst forth from the ports, and even the most daring of the searchers after plunder were forced to quit her and return on board their own vessel. I feared much to be left in my desolate condition on an island of which I knew nothing, and on which, so far as I had seen, there were no signs of human habitation. Stripping off my shirt, I put it on the end of a long stick I found on the beach, and waved it vigorously in the hope of attracting attention. No one, however, seemed to take notice of me, the attention of all being fixed on the burning ship, which, after some two hours and a half from the time I had first seen the smoke, blew up, covering the surface of the sea with wreckage.

As soon as the smoke caused by the explosion had cleared away, I saw that the scampavia was getting under way; and after cruising about among the remains of what had once been the brave ship *Antelope*, she made sail, and soon disappeared round the point from behind which she had come. I was now indeed in a desperate condition, almost naked, hungry and



BLOWING UP OF THE "ANTELOPE." *Page 42.*

thirsty, and nowhere within sight were there signs of anything to supply my wants, unless some wreckage from the *Antelope* might drift ashore, and among it there should chance to be a cask of water, and a barrel of beef or bread.

The sea, which rapidly fell when the wind abated, now permitted me to make out the direction of the reef, much of which projected above water. It was soon evident that I and my hencoop had taken the only passage through the rocks, and that it was a special and crowning mercy that it had so happened, for not a piece of flotsam took the same course, but such as came towards the shore at all were stranded on the higher parts of the reef.

Hungry and thirsty, I determined to try to make my way to where these were. Partly by wading and swimming, and partly by scrambling over the rocks, with much damage to my hands and feet, and many severe bruises, I managed to reach a part of the reef where, among driftwood and other wreckage, were a couple of chests and some casks and barrels which had escaped being stove in.

At first I was puzzled to know how to come at their contents, for with my naked hands I had no means of breaking them open. Looking about among the wreckage, I found an iron bolt sticking out of a shivered piece of wood, from which, after much labour, I managed to draw it. Then, without more ado, I set to work and tried to start the bungs of the casks and

see if perchance one of them contained water, for my thirst had now become unbearable.

I soon pitched upon one which I judged to have been one of the upper tier of water-casks. After some sturdy blows, I started the bung and found that I was right; though how to drink the water, which was some six or eight inches down in the cask, I knew not. I managed to put my hand through the bung-hole and touch the precious liquid with my fingers; but though the few drops that I sucked off them were like nectar, they were not sufficient to assuage my burning thirst. At last I thought of trying to roll the cask on its side, that the water might run out of the bung-hole and I might lap it as it flowed; but though it was easy enough to heel the cask over, I could not keep it steady as I stooped down to it, and every time I did so it rolled away from my cracking lips. I was forced to desist, and in sheer desperation thought I would stave in the cask; but calmer thoughts came to my mind, and I attacked one of the chests with my iron bolt. By good luck it turned out to be that of the carpenter, Jared Stokes, and I found in it some tools, besides clothing, and four large case-bottles of hollands.

I was now in a better position than before, and returning to the water-cask I managed to jam it up with bits of wreckage. I then set to work to cut a hole in it, and after an hour's hard labour I managed to let one of the case-bottles, which I had emptied of its contents, down into the water, and enjoyed a refreshing

draught. Turning my attention to the other casks, I broke open two of them, and found that one was filled with biscuit and another with salt pork.


I had now to consider how to convey my treasures to the shore; and at last I decided on emptying the chest, and, putting such things as I most needed into it, use it as a punt, which I might shove before me. Luckily the carpenter's clothes fitted me, so I selected two suits, a hat, and a pair of boots. Emptying two more of the bottles of their contents, I filled them and the one I had used before with water. Putting all these things and some biscuit and pork into the chest, I launched it on the inner side of the reef, and pushed it before me to the shore. I landed again just before sunset, very tired, and also very hungry, for I had been too busy while on the reef to eat more than a couple of biscuits. Among the contents of Jared Stokes's chest I had fortunately found a flint and steel and tinder-box; and carrying all my belongings to a sheltered spot at the foot of the hillock which I had made my post of observation during the burning of the *Antelope*, I collected some grass and brushwood and made a fire. After a hearty supper of pork and biscuit, I lay down to sleep, not forgetting first to offer up thanks for my escape from peril of death by sea and thirst and starvation.

CHAPTER IV.

TAKEN PRISONER.

I SLEPT as soundly as if I had been on a bed of down, and did not wake till the sun had risen. I had now to try to form some plan as to what my proceedings should be. I had clothes, and flint and steel, and food enough for a week, while two of the case-bottles, which held over a quart each, were still full of water. At first I thought I would again visit the reef to see if I could open some other chests and find something more that might be of use to me. When I was about half-way from the shore, however, there were such evident signs of an approaching storm that I turned back again. Then dressing myself in the carpenter's clothes, and making up the rest of my belongings into a bundle, I set out on a journey of discovery.

Ascending some small hills, I looked around for signs of human habitation. I could see nothing, however, and, sitting down, thought seriously whether it were better to remain by the sea and trust to some passing vessel to pick me up, or to push on in the hope



of finding some village or house before my store of provisions was exhausted.

I did not ponder long, for I soon saw that a passing vessel would pay small attention to any signals I might make, and would probably take me for a wandering goat-herd or some other native of the island. Besides, the nature of the shore was such that no vessel would cast anchor where the *Antelope* had been burned. Shouldering my pack again, I fixed my eyes on a distant point in some wooded hills, and determined to march straight towards it.

I walked bravely along till midday, and then made a scanty meal of biscuit and water, being afraid to touch either the pork or spirits for fear of their exciting an excessive thirst in me. Again I set out, and shortly before sunset found myself once more among hills. Soon my ears were gladdened by the sound of running water. Pushing on, I found a tiny brook running down the side of a hill, and there I rested for the night.

Next morning, thinking that if I followed this water I would be more likely to find inhabitants than if I kept straight for my old landmark, I went down the valley through which the brook ran. After a short time I came upon three men sitting under a spreading tree and making their breakfast off provisions taken out of their goat-skin wallets, laughing and talking as they did so. Overjoyed at seeing human beings, I shouted and ran towards them. They sprang to their

feet, startled and alarmed at my sudden appearance ; and one of them, seizing a long matchlock gun which was lying on the grass, lighted the match, and resting it on the shoulder of a companion, pointed it at me.

I at once halted, not knowing what to do. Fearing much the bullet of this fellow, I sheltered myself behind a tree, and shouted out, in the best *lingua franca* I could muster, eked out by the few words of Turkish which I had picked up, that I was a poor shipwrecked sailor, alone and helpless ; but evidently I was not understood. After a little the man, seeing I offered no harm, lowered the musket ; but when I again attempted to approach he once more raised it, and made signs that I should come no nearer.

Another of the men now made some loud blasts on a sort of wooden trumpet. First a number of goats came running toward them, evidently disturbed from the delights of their morning pasture ; and then other men—goat-herds, like those I had first seen—all of them armed with long knives and some carrying guns, came and joined them. When about a dozen had assembled they signed to me to approach, and examined my bundle and its contents. Evidently they approved much of the biscuits and the hollands, which they shared among themselves, without as much as saying “By your leave” or “With your leave.” After searching the woods to make sure I had no companions, they tied my hands behind my back, and four of them took me a little further down the brook, till we came

into a clear part of the country. Then I saw, close to the shore, a village of huts with stone walls and flat roofs, and some olive groves and vineyards close by.

My guards, or whatever I might call them, took me straight into this village, where we were instantly surrounded by women, children, and mangy curs, each and all expressing their various degrees and kinds of astonishment. I was led to a cottage or hovel, at the door of which sat an old man with long white beard and hair, dressed in the costume of a Greek pope or priest, many of whom I had seen during my different visits to Smyrna.

This person seemed to be no richer or better off than his neighbours; but I expected when I saw him that I should be able to speak with him in the *lingua franca*. He failed, however, to make out any of my attempts to make myself understood, and regarded me with as much astonishment as the women and dogs. A consultation was evidently held as to what should be done with me, and I could see that some proposition was made which was apparently a very pleasing one, and from which I hoped for some good to myself. My hopes, however, were soon dashed to the ground; for I was taken into a small room which had been hastily cleared of its contents, an earthen pot of water and a platter of beans were placed on the ground, my hands were untied, the door was closed and barred, and I was left to myself.

I remained in this place for some days, carefully

guarded, and entirely at a loss as to what was to become of me. One morning, after an uneasy night, I heard signs of unusual stir and commotion in the village; but my prison not having the vestige of a window, I had no means of seeing what they might betoken. I was not long left in suspense, for the door was opened, and two men entered and made signs that I was to follow them. When we got outside I saw some Turkish soldiers in front of the pope's house, into which I was led. There I found a man who had come to collect the taxes of the village, and it came out that the reason why I had been so carefully guarded was, that the pope had, as soon as he saw me, hit upon the idea of selling me to the tax-collector, and thus helping himself and his fellow-villagers to satisfy his demands.

The tax-collector, I found, was a Greek; but he understood the *lingua franca*, and I hoped that when I told my pitiful tale he might be disposed to help me, especially when I said that the factor of the Turkey merchants at Smyrna would be certain to pay for my ransom. He refused, however, to listen to me, and, still a prisoner, he took me away with him the same evening tied to a mule on which one of the soldiers was riding. In this manner I was compelled to follow him in his whole tour round the island, during which I had full evidence that, between their Turkish rulers and this rascally tax-gatherer, the people were indeed ground between the upper and the nether millstone.

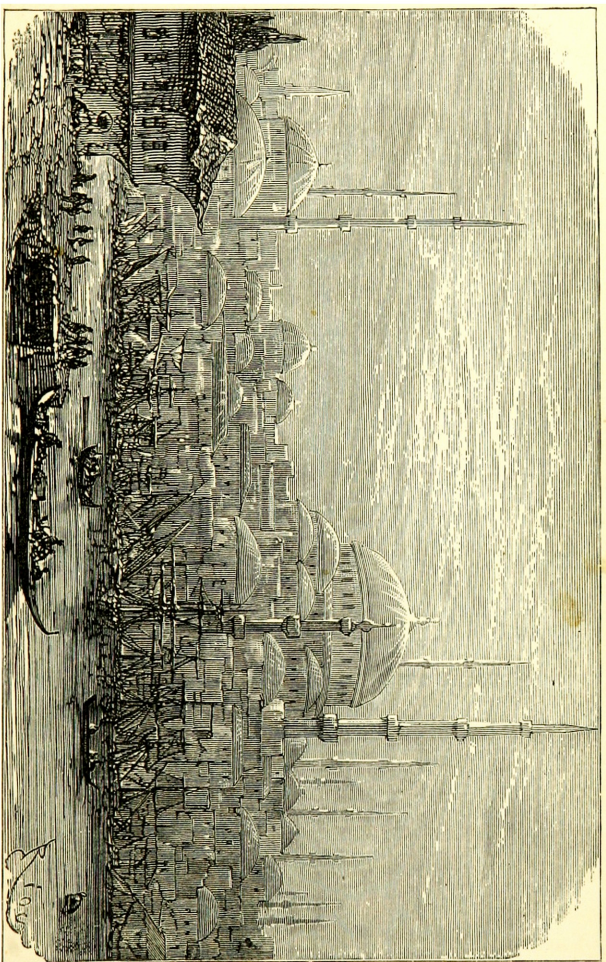
At last, having squeezed everything he could out of the islanders, the tax-collector took one of the country boats and sailed for another island, where he found a xebec ready to take him and others of his kind to Constantinople. On board this vessel were many slaves—virgins torn from their homes; boys intended to be enrolled among the Janissaries, as the famous though unruly soldiers of the Grand Seignior are called; and craftsmen of various kinds, who, unable to satisfy the demands of the tax-collector, had been dragged away from their wives and families, to henceforth labour for the benefit of others instead of themselves. Among this crowd of wretched beings I was cast, and though my position was sufficiently intolerable, I could not help feeling a certain amount of satisfaction that there were others as badly off as myself.

CHAPTER V.

IN SLAVERY.

AFTER a wearisome voyage, we arrived in the Golden Horn, the harbour of Constantinople. No sooner had we cast anchor than a boat, manned by four brawny oarsmen, came alongside, and I was taken ashore and conveyed to a slave-dealer's house near the Mosque of St. Sophia. Here I was confined among negroes, eunuchs, Greeks, Abyssinians, and other unfortunates, in a large underground chamber, from which we were taken every day for exercise in a yard enclosed by high walls, with no possibility of escape.

From the constant changes among my companions it was evident that the slave-dealer drove a brisk trade; but day succeeded day, and week succeeded week, without any change in my lot. I was often brought out to be looked at by purchasers, but was as often sent back again; and it seemed to me that I was condemned to pass my days among the inmates of this slave-trader's prison. We were well supplied with food and water, and kept passably clean, lest our health should suffer;



HARBOUR OF CONSTANTINOPLE.
Page 34.

but the conversation and manners of my companions were lewd and wicked in the extreme, and I oftentimes wondered that such a sinful crew were permitted to exist.

I lost all hope of escaping from among these wretches, as time after time I was sent back after having been exhibited to the customers of this merchant in human flesh. I was rapidly falling into a settled melancholy, rarely opening my lips to any one, and passing days and nights in bewailing my wretched lot.

At last one day I was called up and found a Persian merchant had visited the place, who had, after looking through the list of human chattels, expressed a desire to have a look at me. I was examined by him as if I had been a horse: my chest was thumped, teeth looked at, arms and legs felt, and I was made to walk and run naked round the yard where we took our daily exercise. I expected, as had happened so many times, to be sent back again to my dungeon and the companionship of its loathsome inmates. To my astonishment, I was told to dress myself, and a musket being put into my hands, I was told to show what I knew about its management. Anything, I thought, would be better than going back to the society of my fellow-prisoners, and I did my best to acquit myself creditably. When I had gone through the various motions of loading, firing, etc., the Persian, in whose face I thought I discerned some signs of kindness, examined me as to my knowledge of writing and keeping ac-

counts. Though I could only converse in the *lingua franca*, and had but a moderate knowledge of the Turkish language and characters, he said he thought I would serve his purpose, and commenced to bargain about my price.

What was paid for me I do not know—I think it could not have been more than a fat bullock would have fetched at Smithfield—but I became the property of Ali Khan, a merchant of Teheran, who was about to return to his country. As soon as he had completed my purchase, he told me that upon my behaviour would depend his treatment of me, and that if I was diligent in performing the duties which he set me, I might become free and rich; but he warned me that any attempt at escape would be punished most severely.

Overjoyed at the change, I promised to do all I could in his service, and followed him to his caravan-serai, where I found he had several companions, who, like him, were about to return to their own country. They had many packages of merchandise; and also a number of slaves, some of whom were white women destined for the harems of wealthy and influential people in Teheran. These were carefully guarded and attended by a eunuch and half-a-dozen negroes.

I was not long left at a loss to find what my duties were, for I was set to work at once to make a list of all the packages and bales of goods and their contents. Fortunately, or I think my gorge would have risen

against it, I had nothing to do with the management of the human chattels. I found that Ali Khan and his friends had, by dint of interest and management, arranged for a passage for themselves and their belongings on board a saic or government vessel, which was to take an aga or officer of Janissaries and fifty soldiers to relieve the garrison at Trebizond, and that by this arrangement they were relieved from the necessity of passing their goods through the custom-house.

As nothing, not even firewood or water, would be provided on board this vessel, we had to lay in a stock of provisions of all kinds—sheep, fowls, butter, wheat, coffee, oil, sugar, and what not—and to buy vessels to hold water for our party. When I was brought to the caravanserai, the only vessels that had been got were some large earthen jars covered with straw. I foresaw that these were likely in bad weather to be broken; and after much argument I prevailed upon Ali Khan to purchase two large casks, which would prove a safer and more durable means of storing water. Some of the Persians argued against this as an unjustifiable waste of money, and said that if it were fated that the water should be spilt, it would be spilt. This view would have prevailed had I not asked what was the relative price of casks at Constantinople and at Trebizond, and proved that a profit would be realized by selling them, whereas the earthen vessels, even if they did outlast the voyage, would find no purchasers.

At last all our preparations were made, and Ali Khan,

who kept a very sharp look-out for any attempt on my part at escape, though otherwise he treated me with great kindness and consideration, took me on board the saic. This I found to be a one-decked, two-masted vessel, the rigging and equipment being of the roughest and most primitive description. It was not more than a hundred and twenty feet in length, and had nigh upon two hundred people on board—there being my master Ali Khan, his companions, and their slaves, who numbered over thirty persons in all; the aga of Janissaries, his household, and fifty soldiers, some of whom had their wives and domestics with them; the reis or master of the vessel, his two wives and his slaves, and thirty mariners. There were besides some twenty passengers of various degrees of poverty, some of whom were returning from that pilgrimage to Mecca to kiss the Caaba which it is the duty of every true Moslem to make once in his life. To accommodate all these people there were, besides the cabin of the reis, which was large and handsomely furnished, and might afford comfortable lodging to some eight or ten persons, thirty-two other cabins, some in the hold and some on deck; but they were all very narrow and inconvenient.

The aga took the reis's cabin for himself and his family. The reis, dispossessed of his proper lodging, took for himself and his two wives two other cabins situated on the after-part of the deck; and Ali Khan and his companions had to dispute with the Janissaries for the possession of those for which they had paid.

The lodgment of the female slaves destined to delight the king of Persia and his court was next arranged for; and I thought myself very lucky in having a hole to creep into in a cabin right in the eyes of the saic, under the deck, and nearly filled with packages of merchandise Ali Khan considered of particular value.

Though my berth was inconvenient, and lacked air and light, while the water would be sure to drip on me from the leaky deck whenever there was the slightest sea, my lot was pleasant compared with that of the other slaves, the crew, the poorer passengers, and a portion of the Janissaries. These had to lie about on the deck wherever they could find a place; and the deck was lumbered with water-jars and butts lashed along the bulwarks, with goats, bales of goods, baskets of fowls, and heaps of firewood.

Never had I seen such a scene of confusion as our deck presented when we got on board. The after-part was crowded with the women and attendants of the aga and the reis, and a number of friends who had come to bid them farewell, and who were weeping and wailing as if they had all received sentence of death. Mingled with their cries were the clucking of hens and the bleating of sheep brought on board for provision during the voyage. Round a large square box filled with sand, just before the poop, which formed the ship's fireplace, were a number of slaves squabbling and fighting among themselves while they prepared coffee or narghiles for their masters, who were settling down

in their cabins as if all this noise and confusion were an everyday occurrence. The deck amidships was lumbered with merchandise and baggage, and among the bales and packages the poorer passengers and some of the soldiers were endeavouring to form cozy dens and lurking-places, where they might be sheltered from wind and weather. As soon as a party of them had succeeded according to their ideas in making themselves something of a shelter, so soon would the crew come and turn them out. As for securing or lashing anything of all the miscellaneous lumber that lay about on the deck, no one seemed to think of that.

A favourable wind blowing up the Bosphorus from the Sea of Marmora, we cast off from the quay to which we were lashed, and, spreading our sails, commenced to thread our way through the hundreds of craft of all kinds that surrounded us, paying little attention whether those who had come to bid farewell to their friends had left or not. Their shouts and prayers to be put ashore drew around us a swarm of boatmen, who saw a golden opportunity, and were not slow to seize it, for they would not take any one ashore save on promise of an exorbitant payment.

By degrees we got cleared of all who were not bound on the voyage; and steering right up the Bosphorus, we passed the castles of Europe and Asia, where a guard-boat boarded us to see that all our papers were in order. The breeze falling light, we anchored for the night inside the castles that had lately been built at

the Black Sea entrance of the Bosphorus to prevent the Polanders and Cossacks in their light vessels raiding on the ships trading to Constantinople, which they had often done.

I took the opportunity to persuade Ali Khan and his friends to get some order among their belongings, and also to have a look round our overloaded craft, for I plainly saw that neither from the reis nor his crew was any knowledge of seamanship or navigation to be expected. They had, indeed, a compass to steer by, but their knowledge of that friend of the mariner was scanty. They knew that the needle always pointed to the north, and that the opposite point was south, that east was to the right of north, and west to the left; but of the intermediate points they knew neither the names nor the use. I found that they shaped their course entirely by the land; and when they lost sight of the shore, they steered as near a course as they could judge to where they should pick it up again. If the part they sighted was known to them, well and good; if not, they groped along until they recognized some point or headland. As for the management of their craft, they had little or no idea of plying to windward; and if a storm arose, instead of trying or laying-to, they had no other resource than to take in all their canvas and let the vessel drive. It did not astonish me therefore to hear that, of the fifteen hundred vessels engaged in the Black Sea trade, no fewer than a hundred are yearly cast away, though in winter navigation is entirely suspended.

Ali Khan noticed me overhauling all the sails and rigging with my eye; and, curiously examining the wheel and compass-box, he asked me what I thought of the saic and her equipment, and if it was not wonderful that men by means of the compass were able to continue on their course at night. I took the opportunity to say that I had more knowledge locked up in my brain than the reis and all his crew possessed. After some further talk, he called the reis and the aga to come to him, and proposed that my knowledge should be utilized.

At first the reis objected to a passenger having anything to do with the conduct of his crazy craft. But when he learned that I was an English seaman, and that my master wished me to be employed only for the greater safety of himself and his companions and their venture, and that he would make no claim for reduction of his freight or for any payment direct or indirect for any services that I might render, he gradually withdrew his opposition. Producing a begrimed and tattered chart, on which were indifferently well set down the various ports on the Euxine, and which he regarded with feelings of love and awe, he told me it had been obtained by his father from a Genoese captain who at one time traded in these regions.

I noticed that in but few places were there any soundings marked. Remarking on this lack, I found out that this company of seamen had never even be-thought themselves of using the lead, and that no lead

nor line was to be found on board the saic. After much discussion it was decided that I should help the captain as best I could with the scanty appliances he had. When we separated for the night, and I went down to the kennel which I occupied, I was told that if the wind favoured us, I should be called up to see the vessel get under way, and that when we were in the open sea I should set a course by which we should steer. Accordingly, about four in the morning, I was roused. A fresh westerly breeze was blowing; and the Turks for once in a way doing a thing when they ought, instead of putting it off till too late, we got out of the Bosphorus before the wind changed to the northward. This it did in a few hours, and though it allowed us to lay our course along the land to the eastward, it would have effectually prevented our getting away as we had.

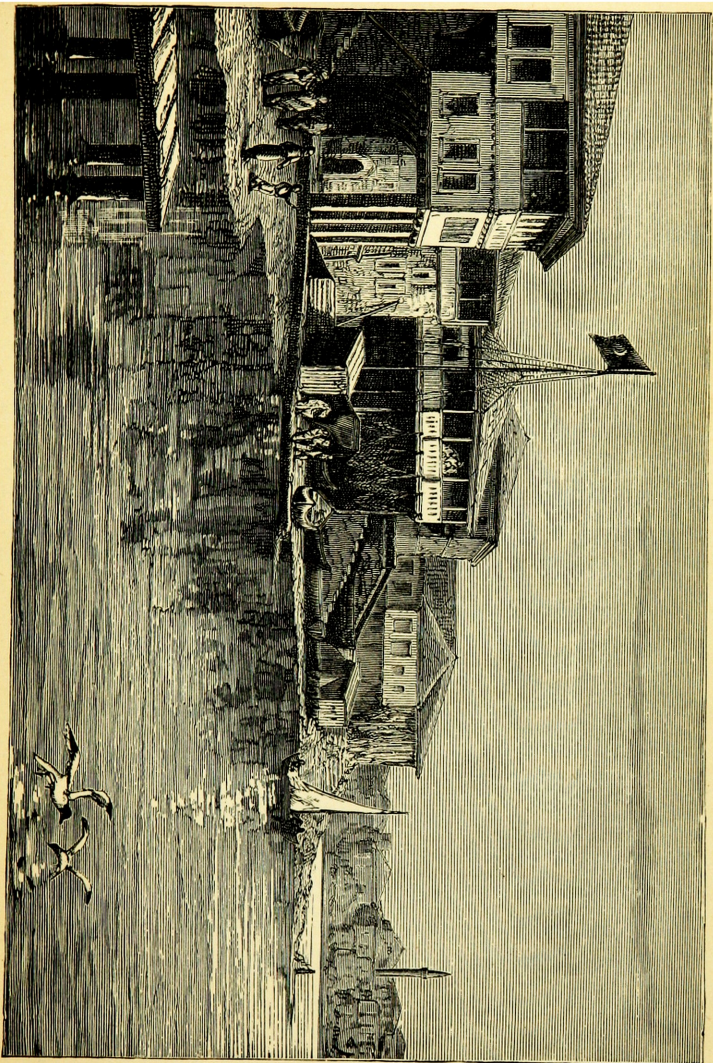
I marked in red on the compass the course we had to steer. By dint of careful watching, I managed to get the steersman to keep the saic's head within a couple of points of it, though my actually knowing how to steer to such a nicety was looked upon by the reis and his crew as savouring of unholy arts. I found the Euxine by no means the horrible place it had been represented; and we arrived at Trebizond without any disaster, though twice our passengers, in squabbling over the right to places at the sand-box, where all the cooking was done, managed to set the vessel on fire. Fortunately on both occasions the flames were extinguished without any great harm having been done.

CHAPTER VI.

AT TREBIZOND.

WE arrived off Trebizond soon after nightfall. Though it would have been easy enough for us to have anchored, the reis would not consent to do so in the dark. We therefore shortened sail, and let the saic drift till morning; by which time we were so far distant from our port that it took us the better part of the day to get back to it again.

No sooner were we moored head and stern close to the shore, than nearly every one on board was clamouring to be put ashore; and when the landing-boats reached us, there was such a rush for them that I made sure they would be swamped. Ali Khan was more sensible than the rest of the passengers, and decided to remain with all his party till next morning—or rather, he told the custom-house officers that he would remain; but, with the aid of some Armenian boatmen, during the hours of darkness he managed to get on shore and past the custom-house a large portion of his merchandise, and had it stowed away in the caravan-



THE SHORE AT TREBIZOND.

serai where we were to stay until we procured mules for our journey to Erzeroum.

When daylight came, the remainder of the goods and the slaves were landed, and, after much chaffering and bargaining, were passed through the custom-house. Here, I think, more was expended on back-sheesh to the officers than was paid to the account of the pasha who was governor of the place. At the caravanserai we found ample quarters for all of us; and for some days we were fully occupied in repacking our goods into bundles fit for loading on mules, and in finding muleteers, mules, and guards.

From all I could hear, the road to Erzeroum was a very difficult one, both on account of the mountainous nature of the country, and also because of the robbers who infested it. These were mostly, as far as I could gather, Kurds, who preyed on the Armenian villagers as they listed, and, by paying some portion of their unrighteous gains to the hangers-on of the pashas, obtained assurance that they would not be disturbed in their calling.

Ali Khan and his fellow-merchants, seven in number, were all armed with long matchlock guns, in the butts of which huge turquoises were imbedded for good-luck. They had besides a whole magazine of yataghans, knives, and clumsy pistols stuck in the shawls they wore round their waists. If one could have believed what they said of their past exploits and present courage and prowess, each of them was fully

equal to their national hero Rustem, and they alone would have sufficed to put to flight all the robbers in the country.

I said to Ali Khan that eight Persians and myself, with those of his slaves he might think fit to arm, would surely be sufficient to guard our party against any possible attack. But he would not listen to me; and after much bargaining and bribing, he prevailed upon the aga of Janissaries to allow ten of his men to accompany us as far as Erzeroum. Even with this escort Ali Khan was not content, and though we were wasting time, he would not start until he had had an additional safe-guard.

Day after day we waited at the caravanserai. I had daily to go to the market and buy our provisions, and load them on the backs of hamals or porters to carry them back to our quarters. I soon became more or less acquainted with these porters; and after a little, as I made my purchases of meat, oil, and bread, and half-pickled vegetables, something like the sour-kROUT of our German cousins, I got into the habit of conversing with them, and telling them about my own country, while they told me about theirs. Doubtless they often thought that I was a great story-teller; for though they would not permit me to see that they doubted me, they would say "Mashallah!" (Wonderful), and that "the cleverness and learning of the Giaours were marvellous." They tried to revenge themselves on me by most extraordinary tales of the



HAMALS AND PROVISION SHOP, TREBIZOND. *Page 70.*

greatness and civilization of their own country in days gone by.

One of these hamals, named Moussa, after a few days, became more regular and constant in his attendance than any of the others. He was so civil and obliging that he was often admitted into the rooms where our merchandise was stored, and Ali Khan, usually most suspicious of strangers, seemed to have no fear of his coming and going. I had a good deal of discretion allowed me in making my purchases, and Moussa often came in for an extra piastre or two for the many little things he did.

I could not understand the reason for the long stay that Ali Khan was making at Trebizond. The season was rapidly passing away. At last I found that a body of Kurds, under a leader called Kara Yusuf, or Black Joseph, was holding the roads, and while living at free quarters among the Armenian villagers, forced them by threats to give information of all parties passing by. So many and such strong parties of travellers had been robbed by them, that, even with the ten Janissaries, Ali Khan and his companions were afraid to risk the journey.

The doings of this Kara Yusuf and his gang formed the theme of conversation in the coffee-shops, khans, and bazaars of Trebizond. Excepting the Tartar post which sometimes arrived from Erzeroum, all communication between the two places seemed to be cut off. I asked hamal Moussa what he knew about this dreaded

Kara Yusuf. He told me that he was not half so black as he was painted ; and that though he might rob rich merchants and Turkish tax-gatherers, he scorned to take anything from the poor except what was necessary to feed the men and animals of his band. When I asked what he was like, he told me that doubtless one day I would see him, and find him not so bad a fellow after all.

Ali Khan seemed in despair at this long detention, and spoke of again taking ship, going further east, and following the road by Ardahan and Tabreez, instead of that by Erzeroum and Lake Van. Before he had put this idea into execution, a vessel arrived from Constantinople, having on board a new governor for Erzeroum, named Faik Pasha, and a body of three hundred soldiers, with orders to put a stop to the depredations of Kara Yusuf, and punish the governor he had come to replace for having permitted them to continue so long.

Faik Pasha had with him a firman enabling him to call upon all officers and governors to assist him. As soon as he arrived he ordered a portion of the garrison to join him, and sent out a proclamation into the surrounding country, calling on all the beys to join him with their followers. In less than a fortnight he had a force assembled of over a thousand men, of whom three hundred and fifty were Janissaries. The remainder were a motley crew, some on foot and some mounted, armed with matchlocks and spears, and led by their hereditary chieftains, many of whom doubtless were

much more disposed to favour Kara Yusuf than to do aught against him. But the orders brought by Faik Pasha were peremptory, and none dared to disobey them.

Ali Khan, as soon as he heard of Faik Pasha's orders, waited upon him and asked for his protection as far as Erzeroum. This, after he had paid well for it, was accorded to him, as well as to the other merchants of our party.

Our only difficulty now was in finding animals for our baggage. After a great deal of trouble this was accomplished. Two tak-tarawans, or litters, each borne by two mules, were provided for the women slaves, who were apparently, in Ali Khan's eyes, the most valuable portion of his venture. But as among both the Janissaries and the followers of the beys we might find many who would be almost as dangerous robbers as those against whom they had been called out, he and his companions concealed on their persons and in the trappings and saddles of their animals the smaller and more precious of their goods. As this had to be done quickly, they employed Moussa to assist them; and being much pleased with his readiness and address, they engaged him to accompany them as far as Erzeroum, in which place he said he was born, and where he was desirous of going.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE WAY TO ERZEROUM.

AT last all our preparations were completed, and early one morning the whole expedition filed out of the narrow streets of Trebizond and commenced its march towards the Kolat Dagħ, which mountains were already capped with snow. Soon we began to ascend their seaward slopes. In front of the column marched a detachment of Janissaries, who maintained some show of order and discipline, though they paid but scant respect to any one but their own officers. With them was dragged along, by bullocks taken from the villagers, a clumsy gun with which Faik Pasha hoped to strike terror into the hearts of the followers of Kara Yusuf. Behind the Janissaries marched the country levies, among whom there was no show of order, each petty chief disputing with his neighbour for what he considered the most honourable and advantageous post. It was easy to see that this motley and ill-organized crowd of horsemen and footmen added little to our strength, even if they did not turn against us in any danger or difficulty.

Behind these came the pasha, with his retainers, slaves, and baggage, escorted by some more soldiers of the Grand Seignior. There was here some hope of order and management, and Ali Khan arranged that our party should come immediately after that of the pasha. Farther in rear were various parties—Armenian peasants, with their belongings packed on bullock-carts and on pack-animals; beggars, dervishes, traders, and all manner of people, who had eagerly seized on this opportunity to make their way from Erzeroum ere the setting in of winter should prevent all travel. The rear was brought up by another detachment of Janisaries, with another cannon.

To describe the dress and appearance of all these people would be impossible. Here you might see the father of a family riding a skinny steed and twanging a rude sort of guitar, careless of his wife and children, who trudged wearily behind him, while their household furniture was stowed in a cart, in the construction of which not a scrap of iron had been used, and which was driven by one of the sons, who, as far as he was able, imitated the laziness and unconcern of his father. There might be seen a man with a couple of pack-animals laden with cloth from Europe for the markets of Kurdistan and Persia; and there, again, another driving a flock of goats or of sheep. A string of sturdy mendicants followed, who, though they had nothing to fear from robbers, thought that in accompanying such a multitude they might, by dint of threats or prayers,

extort something from the charity or the fear of the richer travellers.

If the scene on the road was one of confusion, our halting-place at night was worse. The village which was chosen consisted of about fifty houses of Armenian Christians, which were instantly appropriated by the pasha and the soldiers. Even Ali Khan, who had paid well for leave to travel with them, could only obtain shelter for himself and his party by bribing heavily some Janissaries who had seized on a house for themselves, for leave to occupy a room used as a stable for oxen and goats. These had all been seized and slaughtered by the ruffianly soldiers.

Perhaps this stable was as good a room as any in the village. All the houses were built of walls of loose stones, the chinks being stopped with mud. They were about six feet in height, and the roofs were formed of rafters covered with brushwood and earth, on which a plentiful crop of grass grew. As they were built against the slope of the hill, a large number of them were actually dug out of the ground. A storm of wind of piercing coldness was raging and rain and sleet falling, so that we were glad indeed of this shelter. After we had stowed away our goods, and placed the female slaves in a part screened off by bales and rugs, we kindled a fire of cow-dung, round which we cowered to warm our chilled and weary bodies.

Ali Khan was about to commence on the provisions which we had brought with us, when Moussa told him

to wait. Going out, he soon returned with a great bowl of sour curds, a quantity of eggs, and half a goat, which he had obtained in some inexplicable manner, and before long he had a hot and appetizing meal ready for us.

In this dark and dirty room or stable we had not much to boast of in the way of lodging. The floor was wet and muddy, and the roof not being water-tight, the rain, which was falling heavily, dripped down on us, so that it was only by huddling together in a corner that we managed to keep even tolerably dry during the night.

When morning came, and we went out to load our animals, we found that the rain had turned into snow, and that all the country round was covered with a fleecy mantle. The unfortunate wretches who had been unable to find shelter before it came on had gathered themselves together under the lee of the houses. Having lighted fires of cow-dung, of which curious fuel there was fortunately a good store, and supplemented it with bushes and the logs gathered together for building another hovel, they had managed to pass the night without damage. But many of them, not relishing this foretaste of what they might expect in travelling at this season among the mountains of Armenia, turned back. Several of the beys also who had brought their followers to the standard of Faik Pasha came and said that it was impossible for them to continue the march, and expressed their intention of returning to their own homes.

Faik Pasha ordered the officer of the Janissaries to prevent this wholesale desertion, and soon there was a scene of indescribable tumult. The Janissaries and the followers of the beys came to blows, in which several on both sides were killed. Indeed, if Kara Yusuf had been at hand with his band, he might have fallen upon us and put the whole of us to flight with the greatest ease. Ali Khan, foreseeing the shipwreck of the whole party if these differences were not composed, made his way to the house where Faik Pasha had his quarters. He found him solacing himself with pipes and coffee in front of a blazing fire, utterly regardless of what was going on. Pointing out that the villages through which we should pass would be utterly unable to give shelter to all the party, and that its very size and unwieldiness would only expose it to attack, Ali Khan prayed him to dismiss such of the local levies to their homes as were unwilling to accompany us, and to take from them their horses and mules, on which he might mount the greater part of the Janissaries.

Faik Pasha did not seem inclined to trouble himself about the matter, having, apparently, expended all his reserve stock of energy in effecting the start from Trebizond. He abused Ali Khan as a Shiah heretic, and bade him begone. Foiled here, my master went to the leader of the Janissaries, and pointed out to him the advantage it would be to his men to get the horses and animals of the local levies, and that there might be also an opportunity for him to put some money in

his pocket. That worthy, perceiving a present advantage, fell readily into the scheme, and at once went to the pasha and asked for his approval and orders.

These were now readily granted, and the officer of the Janissaries, who was named Mehemet, ordered his men to cease from the struggle in which they were engaged. He then sent messengers to the leaders of their opponents, to say that Faik Pasha, of his great mercy and consideration, was willing upon terms to permit them to return to their homes.

The beys, who had found that their men had been roughly treated at the hands of the Janissaries, were by no means unwilling to come to a parley. With Mehemet they went into the pasha's house, and, as we afterwards learned, not only gave up the greater part of their animals to the Janissaries, but also paid well for the privilege of being freed from the necessity of accompanying our march.

Soon they were all streaming away to their various homes. Before they left, our useful Moussa managed to buy from some of them their felt cloaks and rugs. These, he said, would keep out any wet or rain; and, as we afterwards found, they were almost impervious to the bitterest and keenest winds. The Janissaries, who had now more horses and mules than they knew what to do with, sold us some of their surplus at a rate which left the purchasers nothing to complain of.

As by the time this trouble had been settled it was too late to make a start with any hope of reaching the

next village before nightfall, and as the snow had rendered the path across the Kolat Dagh dangerous in darkness, it was settled that we should remain where we were until the next morning. The Persian merchants used the time in making a fresh distribution of their more valuable goods, and employed Moussa and myself as the most trustworthy of their dependants in stowing money, jewels, and European trinkets in saddles and other hiding-places.

Next morning we got on our way again betimes, and in three days, though not without discomfort and danger from the snow, we reached the town of Gumish Khana, having seen and heard nothing of Kara Yusuf and his band of robbers. Both Faik Pasha and Mehemet said that nothing would prevail upon him to attack such a powerful party as ours. But in the bazaars a very different opinion was current; for when I went to purchase supplies for our party, I found that his name was in every man's mouth. Stories were rife of the daring exploits of himself and his *deli khans* (wild bloods)—how they had even ventured within the walls of Erzeroum and plundered merchants in the caravan-serais. Indeed, it was said that the wali or governor himself had been robbed by them, notwithstanding his being surrounded by his guard; and that a *cadi* or judge who had dared to sentence a prisoner to the *bastinado* on the suspicion of his belonging to the brigands, had been carried off and taken to one of their haunts in the mountains. Having received as many

strokes as the prisoner, he had been permitted to send into the town to obtain five hundred sequins for his ransom. As the ransom had been long in coming, his captors had cut off his beard and sent that in with a message that, unless the money were forthcoming on a certain day, a finger, toe, or eye would be sent in daily until it was paid. His wife had not been unmindful of this hint: the money had been sent at once to the place named; and the following morning the *cadi*, stripped of his clothes, shaven, and bedaubed with dirt, had been found tied on a donkey, with his face towards its tail, in the *maidan* of Erzeroum before the gates were opened.

I told these stories to Ali Khan, and he went off at once to the pasha, whom he found in good humour, having just enjoyed the luxury of a bath, an institution to be found in every town of any pretension in the Grand Seignior's dominions. Faik Pasha, however, would not listen to him; as no more would Mehemet. The latter said that Kara Yusuf was but a peasant, and that he and his men could never stand against terrible warriors like the Janissaries he commanded, especially when they saw the cannon which with vast toil and trouble had been dragged thus far. Indeed, every one seemed to think that the stories were no more than idle gossip, and that I was causelessly frightened. Even Moussa, who usually agreed with me, laughed at me, and said that if I were afraid I should wear a *yashmak* or veil and ride in a *tak-*

tarawan like a woman. So baseless were the stories deemed to be that Faik Pasha, by the advice of the kaimacan or head-man of Gumish Khana, left one of our lumbering cannon and a hundred and fifty soldiers at this place, as it was represented that the difficulty of getting the whole party across the Kop Dagħ into Erzeroum, and finding shelter and provisions for them on the way, would be very great. The arrival of one of the Tartar post with the news that his companions had perished of cold on the way from Erzeroum made many wish that they might be among those to be left behind; while it was deemed absolutely impossible for any men, robbers or not, to maintain themselves in the mountains in such weather.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ROBBERS' CAVE.

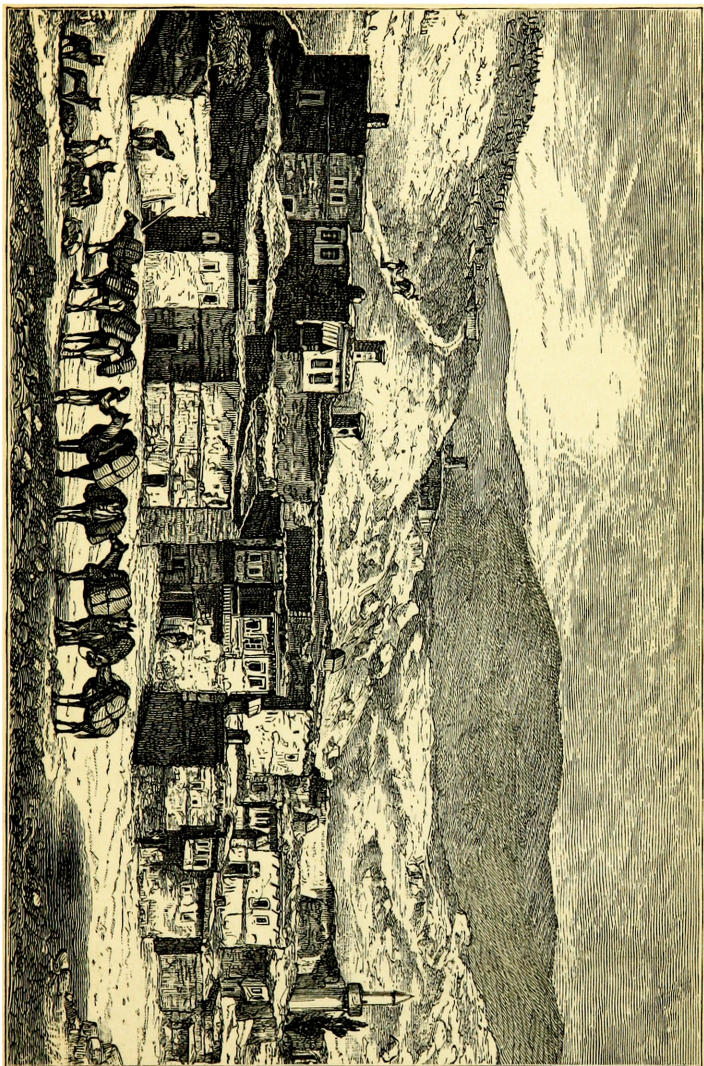
FAIK PASHA would, I felt sure, have wished to be relieved of the journey; and Mehemet, who was not so urgently obliged to go to Erzeroum, said he was too ill to proceed, and committed the command of his men to a lieutenant, who, when we left Gumish Khana, had only two hundred men under his command. When we arrived at Baibout, in three days' time, these two hundred had dwindled to a hundred and fifty; and even they refused to march a single step further if the gun was to be taken with us. They said that to get it across the Kop Dagħ in such weather was an impossibility; and that even if men and animals were found to drag it, no soldiers could work it in the snow-drifts that would be found in the passes.

At Baibout Moussa was even more than usually active in his attendance on Ali Khan and his party. He persuaded us all to get sheepskin coats, and coarse-knitted gloves for our hands, and stockings to draw over our boots; while he covered our stirrups

with straw. He said that the cold we would have to endure in crossing the mountains would be far in excess of any we had yet encountered; and that if a wind came from the slopes of Ararat, "where the ark was hidden from the profane hands of men," it would be so intense that a naked piece of iron, if touched, would burn the flesh as if it were red hot. I felt inclined to ridicule Moussa's precautions; but my master said there was wisdom in them, and that though in this country the summer was overpoweringly hot, yet the winter was cold beyond description. Indeed he had made up his mind, when he arrived at Erzeroum, to stay there till the winter was over, and not risk the journey by Lake Van until the advent of spring had rendered travelling less painful than it now was.

Hearing of the terrors attending the passage of the Kop Dag, I said I could not understand why we should not stay at Baibout; or even return to Gumish Khana, to which place the road was open, and where probably the cost of living would be less than in a big city like Erzeroum. "Verily, my son," said Ali Khan, "thou hast not considered that when the snow is melted Kara Yusuf and his men will again be able to be abroad; and hast thou not read, Nazarene as thou art, what David said, 'that it is better to fall into the hand of God than into the hand of man'? Nay, far from staying or going back, if the cold were ten times more severe, I should rejoice."

The question being thus settled, we set out again



BAIBOUT.

with our diminished numbers, and made our way towards the Kop Dagh. Even before we commenced to climb the steep acclivities of these mountains, the piercing easterly wind made us feel glad of the precautions Moussa had induced us to take; though when we found a spot sheltered from the biting blast, where we could rest in the sunshine, we were fain to divest ourselves of our heavy wraps, and felt glad to stretch our limbs cramped by hours of painful endurance of cold in the saddle.

The road to the foot of the Kop Dagh was by no means an easy one; and the difficulties we found in climbing these mountains were well-nigh insuperable. Men and animals often plunged into deep snow-drifts, from which it was hard work to extricate them; and the tak-tarawans and their inmates were on several occasions nearly buried. We struggled on, however, amid all these difficulties, and at last arrived at a village almost at the summit of the pass, in which we found no inhabitants, all having deserted such an inhospitable place. We were sore put to it to find fuel and food; but by dint of foraging about we discovered under some of the houses subterranean chambers in which both grain and wine were stored. These were eagerly seized by the soldiers and muleteers. The fires which we had made of cow-dung scraped together from some cattle-pens, when supplemented with the grain—surely a most wicked and wasteful use to which to put it—gave out a steady and glowing heat. Though

Ali Khan managed to maintain some order among his slaves and followers, the lieutenant and his men indulged in the wine to such an extent that many of them became intoxicated. In order to be free from their mad ongoings we shut ourselves up in our hut, and huddling round our fire endeavoured to forget in sleep the toils and hardships we had already undergone, as well as the anticipation of those still before us.

About midnight we were aroused by loud outcries and the firing of guns. Turning out to see what was the matter, we found that some of the Janissaries, rendered reckless by drink, had managed, through carelessness, to set their lodgings on fire, and thinking it had been done by some enemy, had turned out to repulse this fancied foe. Fortunately, owing to the construction of the houses, the fire did not spread ; and after a time quiet was restored.

In the morning, when we prepared to resume our journey, it was found that several of the soldiers had strayed away into the snow, and had been frozen to death, and that others had been wounded by the fire-arms of their companions. There was, however, scant time for mourning the dead, for it was necessary now, at all risks, to push on. Leaving the corpses a prey to the wolves, which seemed to be the only living creatures on the mountains, we resolutely set out to climb the remainder of the ascent. Soon the mules carrying the tak-tarawans got off the track and became imbedded in the snow, and it was with the greatest difficulty that we

managed to get out the occupants and free the mules. The women, muffled and bundled up as best we could, were put on the backs of the mules, and we all plodded on through the snow, praying and hoping that we might soon reach the summit, and that the downward path might prove less toilsome than the upward was.

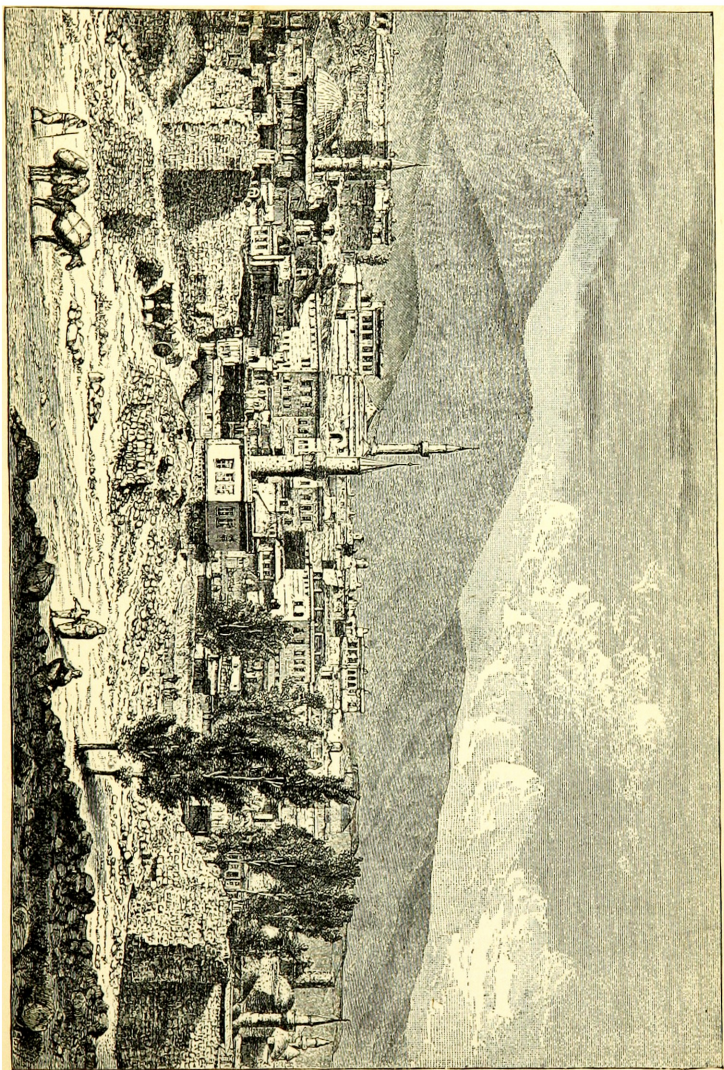
After struggling along for three hours, a shout from the men in front announced that the top had been reached. Pressing on we soon saw stretched beneath us the plain in which Erzeroum is situated, and which is dotted over with villages and small towns. The city itself seemed close at hand, its minarets and mosques rising among the snow-covered roof-tops; but though apparently so close, it was at least thirty miles away, and was not to be reached without much labour. All around this plain, which is drained by the famous Euphrates, rose range upon range of snow-clad mountains. Among these, like a king surrounded by his nobles, towered a lofty peak, which I was told was that of sacred Ararat, distant, according to Ali Khan, six days of rapid marching in favourable weather.

The scene, as we looked onwards, was most beautiful. The peaks of the mountains flashed back the rays of the sun, which was shining brightly, and glittered as if they were covered with diamonds set in frosted silver; while the parts that lay in shadow, by the violence of the contrast, rendered the dazzling brightness of the rest still more marvellous. Though the prospect was charming, we did not linger to enjoy it, exposed as we

were to the biting blast. With hearts lightened by the belief that the worst of our journey was over, we hastened to commence the descent, and soon were slipping and sliding down snow-clad slopes, which, if we had encountered them in our ascent, would doubtless have proved insurmountable.

So cheered were we all by the change in our prospects, that the dreary and fateful halt of the previous night seemed to be forgotten. Some of the men sang scraps of songs, others laughed and jested. Faik Pasha and the lieutenant congratulated themselves that, now they had passed the worst of the mountains, there was no further danger from Kara Yusuf and his men. Ali Khan and his comrades smiled when they thought how, notwithstanding the difficulties of the road, they had sustained so little loss, and made liberal promises to their followers of the indulgence that would be granted to them when we were once safe within the walls of Erzeroum.

As we were thus merrily going along, I felt my arm plucked by Moussa. Looking toward where he was pointing, I saw that Mount Ararat and the other mountains in that direction were all blotted out of view by a dim, leaden-coloured cloud which was rapidly sweeping towards us, swallowing up, as it advanced, every detail of the landscape. This cloud had been seen by others at the same moment, and all our rejoicings were turned into woe, and cries arose, "The snow! the snow! we shall all be lost in the snow!" Exposed as we were



ERZEROUH.

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on the bleak mountain side, with no visible shelter near, it seemed as if these apprehensions were only too likely to be realized. Some seemed inclined to hurry madly onwards, abandoning all their belongings; others threw themselves on the ground and bewailed their evil fortune.

As Moussa had been the first to point out the approaching danger, so now did he show us how it might be avoided. He shouted out that near at hand were caves in which shepherds were wont to shelter themselves and their flocks from the sudden storms which sometimes surprised them in these mountains even in the middle of summer. Running forward about four hundred yards, he turned from the track we were following into a small ravine. Calling upon us to assist him in clearing away the snow, we soon opened the mouth of a cave, into which we huddled pell-mell, men and animals. Shelter, at all events, having been provided, and the snow-cloud not being yet upon us, the more active and hardy of our number cleared the entrances of other caves, in one of which we found a good store of fuel. Moussa, who was apparently well acquainted with the spot, said that he thought he knew where some provisions were hidden also, but that he would not tell the secret to the muleteers or the soldiers, lest they might come and rob the poor shepherds to whom they belonged when fairer weather prevailed. He said that if I would promise to keep his secret I might go with him and assist him in his search.

I at once agreed, and leaving the neighbourhood of the caves, we proceeded further up the ravine. When out of sight and hearing of our fellow-travellers, Moussa gave a low, prolonged whistle, which, after a short pause, he repeated twice. Suddenly from behind a neighbouring rock two men clad in sheepskins and well armed sprang forward, and, seizing me by the arms, hurried me into a large cave, in the middle of which a fire was burning. About forty or fifty men were lying or lounging about, some smoking, some cooking, some mending their clothes—in short, employed in all the various ways in which men having no definite occupation might endeavour to pass away the time.

As soon as I was brought in the men sprang to their feet and seized their arms, with which they were plentifully provided. I was afraid that some violence was intended to me; but Moussa, stepping forward, said, "Harm not the stranger, my children, for he is my friend. But now listen to me, and take heed. You have been careless in your watch. Why were not the signals placed to let me know that you were prepared? It is many days since I sent a messenger to say that the new pasha of Erzeroum and a company of merchants would pass. If it had not been for the snow which is now about to fall, they would have passed by, and our prey would have escaped us."

I listened with astonishment. Was the mild-tempered, cheerful, helpful Moussa no other than the dreaded Kara Yusuf? It was even so. Three or four

men, who seemed to be leaders among this band of robbers, now came forward and said that his orders had been obeyed. About a mile farther on a party had been placed in ambush to surprise us; and men had been stationed to overlook the road and give notice to those in the cave when we had passed by, so that they might fall on our rear when we were surprised by the attack of their comrades in front.

"It is well," said Kara Yusuf; for I must now give him the name by which he was best known. "Now give me some skins of grain, and I and this stranger will carry them to our prisoners, for they will be more valuable to us alive than dead. In the night, when they are asleep, I will lead you to them, and without bloodshed we may secure them all."

I had been standing all this time lost in amazement at the turn affairs had taken. Kara Yusuf, noticing my astonishment, turned to me and said, "Fear not, my friend; you are safe, and no man who obeys Kara Yusuf will lift his hand against you. But beware, lest by word or sign thou tellest thy master or the Turks whom I am, for that moment thou diest."

I said that if he would promise to spare the lives of those whom he had entrapped, I would say nothing, and would do as he bid me. He promised that it should be as I wished.

We were soon on our way back to the rest of the travellers, laden with grain, cheese, and dried meat. When we entered the cave, Ali Khan, seeing what we

had brought, told Kara Yusuf that he would reward him beyond anything he had ever dreamed of on our arrival at Erzeroum. Kara Yusuf smiled, and muttered to himself, "He promises me a part of that of which I already possess the whole."

Yusuf and I made two more journeys to the robbers' den, and each time returned loaded with provisions. By this time the snow had commenced to fall so heavily that it was impossible for us to get along; and as there seemed to be no possibility of our being disturbed in our cave, every one set about rendering himself as comfortable as the circumstances permitted.

Kara Yusuf, though I would in no circumstances have betrayed him after my promise, never quitted me for an instant, and let me fully understand that any suspicious action on my part would be instantly rewarded by a stab from his yataghan. After the toils of the road and the excessive cold to which they had been exposed, the whole party were soon overpowered with sleep; and even I, though I tried hard to keep awake, could not resist the heaviness that came upon me, and, lying down beside Kara Yusuf, I slept as soundly as the rest.

CHAPTER IX.

KARA YUSUF AND HIS PRISONERS.

I KNOW not how long I had slept when I was awakened by Kara Yusuf placing his hand on my mouth. He told me, as I valued my life, to be silent, and then ordered me to rise and follow him. He led me to a corner where he said I would be out of harm's way ; and then going to the other side of the cave, he struck thrice against it with his dagger. Instantly a large rock was rolled to one side, and the cave was filled with armed men, who threw themselves on its sleeping occupants, and commenced to bind their hands and feet.

Completely surprised, and also outnumbered, no resistance was attempted, and in less time than it takes to write it the soldiers, merchants, and slaves were prisoners of Kara Yusuf and his robber band. As soon as the surprise had been carried out, Kara Yusuf ordered the pasha, the lieutenant, Ali Khan, and his fellow-merchants, together with myself, and all the baggage, to be taken to the cave where I had learned

the identity of Kara Yusuf and our pleasant, useful, and obliging fellow-traveller. There, with the aid of a few of his men, he opened all the bales and boxes. Much to the anguish of the Persian traders, he also routed out the hidden valuables from their hiding-places in the saddles and trappings of the mules and horses, laughing as he did so, and telling the unfortunate owners that they should have been more careful as to who were witnesses of their being stowed away.

When all the belongings of the unfortunate merchants had been collected, Kara Yusuf examined and appraised them. He then said that, as it was not easy for him to dispose of many of the things, which were useless to him and his men, he would be content if the merchants ransomed them from him for half their value. If they would pay him the amount in money, he would guarantee that they and all their slaves and belongings would be sent in safety into Erzeroum; and that no one would molest them on their leaving that place in the spring until they reached Lake Van, beyond which he possessed no authority.

The merchants tore their hair and protested that they were ruined. But Kara Yusuf replied that they were in his power, and that not only could he keep all that belonged to them, but that among his band were many devout and orthodox Sunnites, who would be only too delighted to cut the throats of any number of Shiah heretics.

His arguments convinced the merchants of their

helplessness, and Ali Khan, as spokesman for his party, no longer demurred as to the amount of ransom to be paid, but asked how in a mountain cave the money was to be provided. "Oh," answered Kara Yusuf, "if thou art willing the means will be provided. In the city of Erzeroum there are doubtless many merchants who would recognize a paper sealed with thy signet, and a writing can be sent by a messenger whom thou canst trust."

"Where is this messenger?" asked Ali Khan.

"Why, thy Frank slave. Though he be a Nazarene, he is honest, and I will trust him; and thou knowest full well that thou also canst place reliance in him."

"Truly said, my master; I will give him a writing, and it shall be even as thou wilt."

Kara Yusuf now went away to provide writing materials. Whilst he was gone Ali Khan approached me and whispered, "Thou canst do me a great service." He then informed me that hidden in a tight vest which he wore, and in his girdle, were gems of extraordinary value which he had purchased at Constantinople by order of the king of Persia, and that if they were found he would be indeed ruined. He therefore desired me to make some excuse for changing clothes with him; and once I was away he would not be afraid of his being searched, which no doubt would sooner or later be done by such accomplished thieves as those of whom his quondam servant was the chief.

I at once agreed; and when Kara Yusuf. on his

return, said he would send me away in the dark, so that I should not be able to guide any one to his den, I instantly seized upon this as a plea for asking Ali Khan to give me more clothes to protect me from the intense cold of the night. After much well-feigned reluctance he said he would give me his vest, which was an old one.

Kara Yusuf laughed at his economy in giving me one so worn and patched. Noticing the belt which Ali Khan also took off, he asked if there was anything in it. Ali at once opened a small pocket in the end of the belt, in which he said there were only three or four sequins which he kept there for the daily expenses of his party. "Well," said Kara Yusuf, "give the Frank the belt, and the sequins too; he will want something to pay for food and lodging." After a few words Ali Khan handed it to me, and I could feel from its weight and thickness that, if it contained, as he said, jewels and gems, they must indeed be of great value.

I was soon as well prepared as I could be. The writing sealed by Ali Khan was then intrusted to me to give to a Persian residing in Erzeroum; and also a paper of directions from Kara Yusuf to a Jew living in a street near the quarter of the coppersmiths, who apparently acted as agent for the robbers.

As soon as I had received these papers I was told to go. Thinking that something might perhaps have to be said about the capture of Faik Pasha and his escort,

I asked Kara Yusuf if he had any message to the authorities concerning them. "Trouble not thyself with what does not concern thee," he replied. "The Governor of Erzeroum will rejoice to hear that his successor is in my hands; and I will make my own terms with the Turks as to who shall be governor. Now my men await thee; begone, and may thy fate be propitious."

Coming out of the cave, I found that the snow had ceased to fall, and that the stars were shining brightly. A party of ten men were waiting in readiness. To them Kara Yusuf whispered a few words. Two of them advancing bound a cloth over my eyes, and taking me by the arms led me forward.

For some hours we stumbled along through the snow. At times when the path, as I could hear from the conversation of my guides, was specially dangerous, I was lifted up and carried, being warned not to struggle. I was indeed glad when we reached a smoother and less difficult road, where, still blindfolded, I was put on the back of a horse, and my guards handed me over to the charge of other men.

On and on we went, and soon by the pace we were travelling at I found we were on level ground; but still I was not allowed to remove the bandage from my eyes. Twice during the day we stopped at villages, where I was taken into a room and given some food; and towards nightfall we halted at a village which I was told was only an hour's ride from Erzeroum.

Here I was lodged for the night, and my eyes were uncovered. In the morning a man came and said that a mule was ready for me, and that he would guide me to the place where I had to go. Coming out of the house I found a few people about, some of whom reviled me as a Persian, for I was dressed like one; but my guide said something to them which had the effect of stopping them. Soon we were ambling along the road towards Erzeroum, and in a little while we crossed the Euphrates, here an inconsiderable stream.

I could see the town close at hand, surrounded by gardens and groves of trees, the domes of its mosques rising among the houses, while the minarets soared skyward in scores. Conspicuous among the latter were the lovely twins, the Iki Chifteh, flanking the dome of a Moslem college, the blue tiles that covered them reflecting the rays of the morning sun. Close to the Iki Chifteh was the citadel; while everywhere I saw low circular towers with conical roofs, which my guide said were the tombs of the saints who had converted the country to Mohammedanism. When we came to the gate of the town it had just been opened, and the herdsmen were coming forth with their cattle and flocks, though where they could find sustenance on the frost-bound ground I was unable to divine.

We made our way through these; and my guide saying a few words to the keeper of the gate, we were permitted to enter the city.

CHAPTER X.

SEEKING A RANSOM.

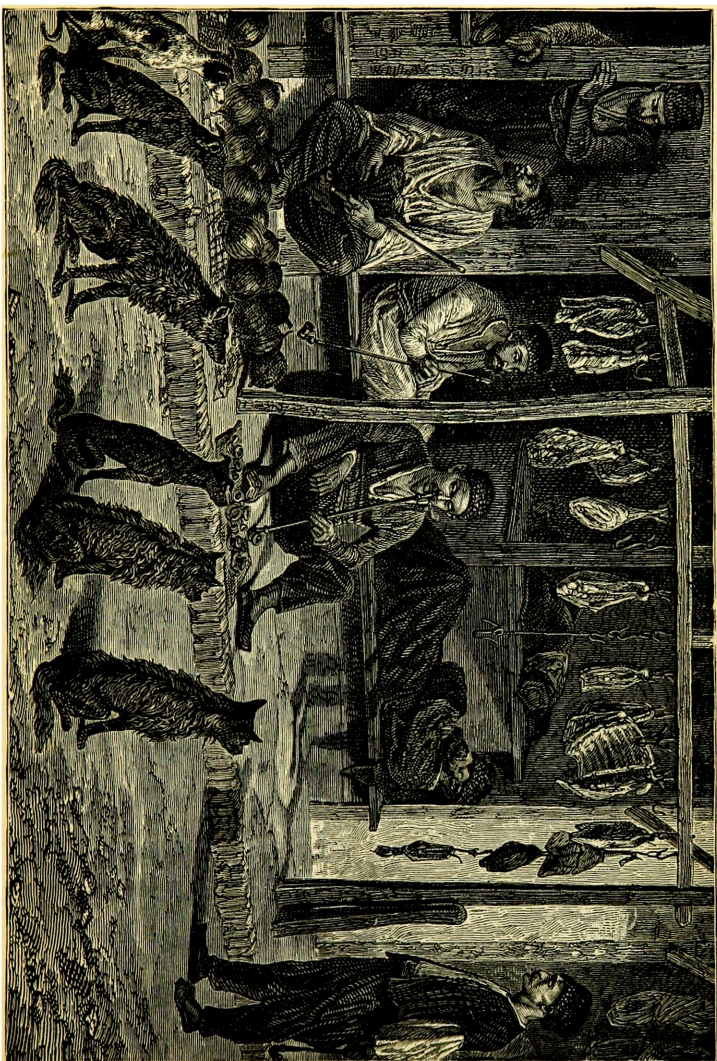
ERZEROUM, though beautiful from a distance, like all Eastern towns did not improve upon closer acquaintance. The streets seemed to be receptacles for all the refuse of the houses ; and hungry dogs were quarrelling for garbage round the shops of the butchers, which were situated near the gate by which we had entered.

We had not gone far past the butchers' shops before I heard a noise of hammering, and my guide said that we were approaching the bazaar of the coppersmiths. Truly the sight, when we came into it, was marvellous. I do not know how many shops there might have been, but they were all full of men busy making copper vessels of all sorts and sizes, from huge kettles that might hold twenty gallons down to coffee-pots and jugs. Whilst we were passing along I was utterly unable to hear a word my companion said, and had to rely on signs for my guidance. About half-way down this bazaar we turned into a narrow street, and then following some tortuous and filthy alleys, we stopped before a low door in a blank brick wall.

At this door my guide knocked, and told me to dismount from my mule, which he instantly led away, leaving me standing by myself. After waiting some minutes, the door was opened by a negro, who signed to me to enter quickly. Closing and locking the door carefully, he led me along some dark and evil-smelling passages to a little room half-lighted by a smoky oil-lamp, the only furniture in the place being a rude divan covered with tattered chintz. Here he left me; and I was alone for half an hour or more.

I was wondering what could be going to happen to me,—if Kara Yusuf knew of the contents of the vest and belt of Ali Khan, and intended me to be made away with for sake of them in this villainous-looking den,—when I heard the sound of shuffling steps. Presently the door opened, and an old Jew, dressed in yellow clothes, entered the room, and shambling across the floor to the divan, seated himself on it. A fit of coughing, which seemed to tear him to pieces, prevented his speaking for some minutes; but at last he said, in the *lingua franca*, “So, my son, Yusuf has the merchants of the king of Persia in his power, and also the new pasha of Erzeroum and his Janissaries. Verily ’tis a brave load; but now tell me the tale truly.”

I hastened to relate to him what had happened, and how I had been sent to arrange for the ransom of my master and his friends. As he said he was the person to whom the paper written by Kara Yusuf was intended, I delivered it to him. After he had examined



BUTCHERS. ERZEROU.

it closely, he said, "It is well. My slave shall conduct thee to the Ajemi merchant, Shanavas Khan, in the bazaar of the dealers in silks and precious metals. But beware how thou sayest aught that is not necessary; for the eyes of Yusuf can see in every corner, his ears can hear even inside the walls of a house, and his arm would be powerful to reach thee even if thou wert sheltered in the citadel and guarded by all the soldiers of the garrison. Be cautious, and all will be well with thee. Yusuf says that thou art a Frank from the distant island of Britain. There my countrymen, the sons of Judah, dwell safely; and it is well for thee that it is so, for I, Ayoub ben Daood, will protect thee. Now go, and be diligent in thy business."

The old man clapped his hands as he finished speaking, and the same negro that had admitted me appeared again, and signed to me to follow him. We left the house by a different door from that by which I had been admitted; and the negro, trotting along in front of me, led the way through streets, alleys, and lanes until we came into the bazaar where Shanavas Khan had his shop.

This bazaar was a long passage lighted from the top of its vaulted roof. On either side were ranged the shops of the dealers in merchandise of value, the owners, seated on the shopboards, either indulging in the soothing fumes of their narghiles or bargaining with their customers.

Making our way through the people that thronged

the bazaar, we soon reached a shop or stall where two Persians were seated smoking, to whom my guide whispered a few words and withdrew. The elder of the two men motioned to me to be seated by him, and called out to a boy to run to a neighbouring coffee-shop and bring coffee and another narghile. Then bidding me welcome, he commenced to question me as to my news.

I said I had come to him from his countryman Ali Khan ; but that the business on which I had to speak could not be talked about in that place.

Shanavas Khan said it was well, and that as soon as I had had coffee and a pipe he would leave his stall in charge of his son and take me to his own house. I imitated as well as I could his unconcern ; but I longed to be rid of the belt and vest of my master, and to have the responsibility of them off my hands. I am afraid that I puffed at my narghile rather more rapidly than became my Eastern dress ; for I attracted the attention of a passer-by, who, after looking at me fixedly for some time, said something to my host which I did not understand, but which seemed to trouble him. Instead of waiting till the pipes were finished, he told his son to look after the shop and be careful that nothing was stolen ; and putting on his shoes, and taking a huge key from a bunch that was hanging upon the wall, he said, " Come with me to mine own house, and there thou mayest impart to me the news of my friend."

The house was situated only a short distance from the bazaar. Shanavas, unlocking the door, led me into a small room, where he said we would be safe from eavesdroppers and I might speak freely. I at once gave him the letter of Ali Khan, and begged that I might be relieved of the vest and belt, for I feared much that something might happen to them whilst they were in my possession.

After reading the letter, Shanavas Khan seemed to be much troubled, and said, "Verily, the money which he tells me to pay for him is a large sum, and I have it not in my hands. The security of the word of a robber that he will return the goods is of no value. I know of no one who would advance money on the promise of Ali Khan in these circumstances."

I answered that I believed that though Kara Yusuf was a robber, still he would not break his word; but perhaps the gems which I had with me, and which were, as Ali Khan said, of great value, would be sufficient pledge for the repayment of the money wanted.

Shanavas Khan instantly demanded to see them. Making sure that the door and window were carefully closed, and that no one was in hiding under the divan or anywhere else in the room, he ripped open the belt which I handed to him, and was absolutely astonished at the value and beauty of the gems it contained. Nor did those sewn into the vest prove less valuable.

"Here, indeed, is sufficient for ten times the amount," he said; "but I must be cautious as to whom I show

these. If they are lost, Ali Khan will doubtless be built into a wall by the king of Persia, instead of receiving a reward. But I must think."

After some time Shanavas Khan said, "I have it;" and moving the divan, he exposed an iron door built into the wall, which he unlocked. Behind it was a recess, also lined with iron, in which he put the gems. When he had relocked the door and put the divan in its place, he said, "I have been lacking in the duties of host. Thou must be hungry and weary." Conducting me to another room, he provided me with food; and then telling two slaves to attend me to the bath, and give me clean clothes, which I sorely needed, he left me, to find the man from whom he expected to obtain the necessary money.

When I had bathed and dressed myself, I was taken into a room where carpets and cushions were spread by the side of a huge stove. Lying down upon them I was soon fast asleep.

CHAPTER XI.

AN UNEXPECTED CHANGE.

WHEN I awoke I found that Shanavas Khan and the man who had noticed me in the bazaar were in the room. I was astonished by the latter addressing me in English, which he spoke excellently well, though with a curious accent. He asked me what I, an Englishman, was doing in Erzeroum, and how I came there.

I said that my story was a long one, but that I was a shipwrecked English sailor who had been made a slave by the Turks. I asked who he was, and how he came to know that I was an Englishman, and where he learned to speak English.

He smiled and said, "My answer is simple enough. I am an Armenian, and agent for the English merchants at Bassorah, and travel here and to Persia, selling both Indian and English goods. But now tell me your story more fully, and I may be able to help you."

I launched out into my history, Shanavas Khan sit-

ting by in mute astonishment. When I had concluded, the Armenian said, "You have undergone many misfortunes, and are, I believe, an honest man. I will make it one of the conditions of my obtaining this money for Shanavas Khan and his friends that they give you your freedom. Then you may travel with me to Bassorah; though the journey will be long, for I have to visit Diarbekir, Mardin, Mosul, and Baghdad on my way. If you will assist me in my dealings, I will repay you. Once at Bassorah, you will be assisted by your countrymen in whose employment I am, and will be able to obtain a passage to the English factory at Bombaim, where of late years ships from London come regularly."

I was overjoyed at this change in my prospects, and told this new friend that I would be obedient to him in all things.

George Boyajan, as this good Armenian was named, now turned to Shanavas Khan and said that he would select from the jewels I had brought with me those he would take as security; and that on the following day, if he would guarantee me my liberty, the money required should be forthcoming to pay Kara Yusuf's agent, Ayoub ben Daood. On hearing Daood's name mentioned, I told Boyajan what he had said about promising to protect me.

"That is well," he answered. "I will tell him to write to Kara Yusuf to cause your master to give a paper for your freedom before he sets him at liberty ;



KARA YUSUF.

and he will not be able to go back of his bargain when he finds himself within the walls of Erzeroum."

The terms of the loan were soon settled, and then my new friend told me to come with him and he would provide me with all that I wanted. He took me to a house not far from that of Shanavas Khan, where he lodged with one of his countrymen. Here, in English, sure that no one could understand us, I told him that Faik Pasha and the Janissaries were also prisoners of Kara Yusuf and his band. At this he laughed heartily, and said that the robber could be trusted to make his own bargain. Doubtless, having the new governor in his power, he would make arrangements for a free pardon, and, with the money received from Ali Khan, he would settle as a great and much-respected man in Erzeroum or its neighbourhood.

His words came true. About a week afterwards Faik Pasha came into Erzeroum escorted by the Janissaries, and also by a Kurdish chief, dressed in the height of Kurdish fashion, and his followers, who were reported to have put to flight a body of robbers that had attacked Faik Pasha. But this gorgeous chieftain was really none other than the quondam hamal Moussa and the bandit Kara Yusuf. In their train were Ali Khan and his companions.

George Boyajan remained in Erzeroum for the winter months, during which time I assisted him as well as I could in his dealings, which were very extensive. Then obtaining a powerful escort from my old friend--who

was no longer called Kara (or Black) Yusuf, but was feared and respected as Yusuf Bey, the friend and companion of Faik Pasha, the governor, whose predecessor had been bowstrung on his arrival—we set out on our journey. On the way, Boyajan, who was a well-informed man, pointed out to me the natural wealth of the country, the ancient home of his race. He told me stories too of the wealth and prowess of the ancient Armenian kings, and remarked that the Arab saying, "Where the foot of the Turk has passed the grass will not grow," was amply proved by the present state of the country.

Passing by Erzengan and Kharput, where we crossed the Murad Su, a branch of the Euphrates, we came in less than a month to the famous and ancient city of Diarbekir, otherwise known as Kara Amid, or Black Amida, and of which the proverb says, "The stones are black, the water is black, the dogs are black, and the hearts of the people are black also." For the first three items I can vouch as to their correctness; but as to the last, fortunately no occasion arose for us to test its accuracy.

Diarbekir, situated on the banks of the Tigris, is well worthy of the notice of any traveller. First, perhaps, among the objects of interest is the great bridge across the river, whose piers in their lower parts date from the most remote antiquity. The stones still bear the marks of the masons who hewed them into shape, and who, according to Boyajan, were countrymen and con-

temporaries of those who wrought under Hiram, the architect of the Temple of Solomon. The upper part of the bridge has been destroyed and rebuilt, and exhibits a diversity of styles. This bridge is even more important to the prosperity of Diarbekir than the walls by which the city is surrounded, and which also bear signs of antiquity and of the many sieges and changes through which the ancient capital of Armenia has passed. These walls are very lofty, and are pierced by four gates, while the top is wide enough for a carriage to drive round. At intervals they are divided by lofty towers, which, during the wars of ancient days, when Armenia was the prize contested for in many a war between the Roman and Persian empires, were garrisoned by Roman legionaries. The breaches which from time to time have been made in the walls have been repaired with the materials which first came to hand; and Roman inscriptions and Armenian and Persian writings are mixed together pell-mell, some on end, some upside down—in fact, the stones have been built into the walls irrespective of what was sculptured on them.

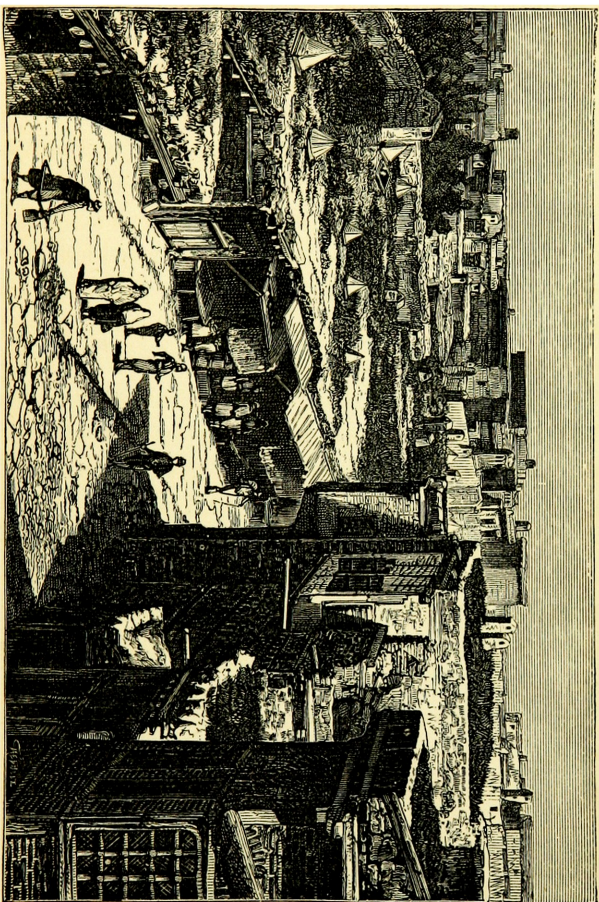
Diarbekir was one of the cities where Christianity earliest took root and flourished; indeed, a building was shown me which is said to be the first that ever was specially built for the purposes of Christian worship, and which dates from the first century. In ancient days churches must have abounded; but many are now turned into mosques, while others are used as magazines of arms and powder by the Turks. Only a

few have been left for their original purpose, and these are divided between the Armenian and Syrian Christians, many of whom, notwithstanding the oppression of the Turks, still exist in the city. There are also to be seen the remains of the ancient heathen temples built by the Romans before the days of Christianity.

Entering the city by the gate facing the bridge, we rode up the narrow dirty streets to the residence of the Armenian bishop, where lodging was provided for us. Here we stayed for some days, while Boyajan transacted the business which had brought him to this city.

One morning he received letters which called him two ways at once. From Urfa his correspondent wrote that there was business requiring instant attention; while, on the other hand, he received news that his agent at Jezireh, where the annual wool-market was held, had died during the winter, and that it was absolutely necessary that his place should be filled before the arrival of the caravans bringing in the wool for which advances had, as was the custom, been given the year before.

In this state of affairs he hardly knew what to do, but after some little consideration he decided on sending me to Urfa and going himself to Jezireh. When he told me of this decision, he made me promise that I would not take the opportunity of going on to Aleppo, and, by the help of the agent of the Company of Turkey Merchants there, effect my return to England. As I felt myself bound to him by the kindness he had



STREET IN DIARBEKIR.

shown to me, I willingly undertook to carry out his instructions and promised to return to Diarbekir with all despatch.

I knew that it would be difficult to obtain assistance from the agent, but that it would be easy to get him to send a letter home, and therefore this promise was not a difficult one to make. I had also a great desire to visit, before I returned home, some of the great cities of the East of which I had heard so much; and what I had already seen and undergone, instead of rendering me afraid of dangers and difficulties, only whetted this desire and rendered it more keen.

As soon as our plans were settled, Boyajan went to the wali, or governor, and obtained a pass for me to go to Urfa. He also got permission for me to be accompanied by an escort of seven men, who would be required in case of my meeting with any of the robbers by whom the roads were said to be infested.

These seven men were Kurds, of the tribe to which Saladin, the generous and chivalrous opponent of Richard Cœur de Lion, and Zobeide, the wife of the caliph Haroun al Raschid, belonged. But I am forced to say that little chivalry or honour was present among them, though they faithfully performed their duty towards me.

The chief was named Mustafa. He and all his companions were well armed with matchlocks, pistols, swords, and knives; indeed, each man seemed to be a moving arsenal. They were all mounted on hardy and

active ponies, while I was provided with a horse trained to amble, or, as the Arabs called it, a *rakwan*, and a mule was loaded with my personal baggage.

George Boyajan told me before starting to keep a sharp look-out on my escort, for they were all robbers, and if they supposed that I carried any valuables they might perchance turn on me. They would, however, he said, certainly protect me against all other banditti. In order to avoid exciting their cupidity, I was only provided with the money actually necessary for my journey to Urfa. Indeed, I had only to conduct negotiations in that place, and arrange with Boyajan's Aleppo correspondent about the reception of Indian goods, silks, spices, and other valuable merchandise, which were about to be despatched from Baghdad to Aleppo, where Genoese, Venetian, and English merchants would compete for them.

CHAPTER XII.

A FATAL ENCOUNTER.

LEAVING the narrow and dirty streets of Diarbekir by a gate opposite to that by which I had entered, we emerged upon a barren and desolate-looking plain, at the other side of which rose the Karaja Dag, the summit of which was still covered with snow. After three hours' riding we commenced to ascend the mountain, and entered into what was pointed out to me as an oak forest, though none of the trees were more than four or five feet in height. Notwithstanding their diminutive size, however, they afforded sufficient cover to enable parties of robbers to lie in wait for passers-by.

Soon after we had got amongst this waste of scrub I noticed that my companions began to look anxious, and lighted the matches of their guns. I endeavoured to find out from them what they feared. I could, however, get no answer; but seeing them dismount, I followed their example, and saw to my dagges or horse-pistols, of which Boyajan had furnished me with a pair fitted with wheel locks.

Presently a party of men rushed upon us from the cover of the scrubby oaks. Fearing that they were going to attack us, I levelled one of the dagges I had in my hand at the head of the foremost, but before I could fire one of my companions struck up my arm. I thought that I was betrayed, and turned on the fellow, determined to sell my life as dearly as possible. I soon found, however, that the new-comers had no evil intention towards us. They had only been lurking by the path on the look-out for a Turkish tax-gatherer, about whose coming they wished to obtain information.

This was readily given by my companions; and then the new-comers invited us to come to their lurking-place. This I found to be a hole scooped out in an overhanging bank, and littered with skins and pieces of felt. In the middle a fire was burning. Over this hung a caldron, the contents of which smelt very savoury; and my appetite being sharpened by the ride, I was not loath to join in their discussion.

The mess was made of goat-flesh, bruised wheat, and garlic boiled together. We all put our fingers into it in search of choice morsels; and the head man of our hosts, when he chanced upon a bit which he thought specially good, evinced his courtesy towards me by stuffing it into my mouth. As his hands had not apparently been washed for months, this was an attention with which I could easily have dispensed. The rude meal was washed down with draughts of a coarse red wine stored in skin bottles. Having, by the

advice of Mustafa, given our hosts a present of a few piastres, we remounted our steeds and resumed our journey.

I now entered into conversation with Mustafa, and from him I learned that the men we had just quitted were his fellow-tribesmen. At first he had feared they might belong to a tribe with which they were at feud. Now, however, for this day at least, our road was perfectly safe; although, before we reached Severeck, which we should do on the following day, it was not unlikely, his friends had said, that we would fall in with some fellows with whom we probably would have to exchange blows before they permitted us to pass.

At sunset we came to a village of flat-roofed huts, where we found shelter for the night. Our lodging was but rough, being on the earthen floor of a large room which we shared with our animals. Through the chinks of the rough stone walls the chilling wind of the mountains found easy entrance; though this annoyance was somewhat compensated for by these same chinks affording escape for the smoke from the fire of cowdung which we had lighted to warm ourselves, for chimney there was none.

Next morning we were on the road as soon as the sun rose. For some distance we had nothing to contend with except the difficulties of the road, which was one of the most execrable I had ever seen, and the cold winds, which seemed to pierce one to the very marrow, though the sun was very warm. After three

hours' march, we halted to take a hasty meal in a spot where we were sheltered from the icy blast.

We all took advantage of our halt to look to our arms, for we were now approaching the place where our friends of the day before had warned us that we might expect to meet robbers. When we were again on the road, we found the wind even colder than before, by the contrast to the warm nook we had just quitted. It seemed impossible that any people could be lurking about in such a temperature. Occasionally we passed some shepherds wrapped up in huge felt cloaks, and we eagerly asked them if they had heard of any dangerous people being about; but one and all said that they knew nothing, and our fears of an attack began to subside.

About dusk we came upon signs of cultivation; and Mustafa told me that in less than an hour we would arrive at Severeck, where we would find lodging and warmth in the caravanserai.

We were pushing eagerly on when suddenly a volley was fired at us from behind some rough stone walls which enclosed a vineyard. My horse was shot through the head and fell to the ground, bringing me with him, and bruising me severely. Before I could clear myself from his body, a couple of men were on me and dragged me to one side.

I struggled and resisted as well as I could. After a little I managed to get out of their grasp, and springing to my feet set my back against a wall. I had

about a quarter of a minute to look around before my assailants came on again, and I saw that my companions were defending themselves bravely. Three bodies were lying motionless on the ground, but it was too dark to see whether they were those of friends or foes.

I had no time to learn further how matters stood, for my two assailants came on at me again with their knives drawn. Fortunately one was in advance of the other, and hitting out with my left arm I caught him on the temple and sent him to the ground like a felled bullock. Before I could recover myself, however, his fellow was upon me, and thrust his knife at me, running it through my clothes and inflicting a surface wound on my side. It was lucky indeed that the blow had not been a few inches more to the right, or it would have struck me full in the body. The force of the blow was such that the blade of the knife shivered in pieces against the wall behind me.

I took advantage of this to seize the man by the throat with both hands, and forcing him backwards soon had him on the ground, with my knee on his chest.

I called out to Mustafa to know how our companions were faring, but received no answer. Immediately afterwards I felt a sharp stinging sensation in my right shoulder, as if it had been pierced by a red-hot sword; and then I received a blow on my head, and fell senseless.

When I came to myself I found that I was lying on

a pile of rugs and carpets in a small white-washed room. Sitting by me was one of my escort, named Hamed, whose head was bound up in a blood-stained rag. I could not at first remember what had happened. Trying to lift my right hand to my head, which felt as if it would split, I found I could not raise my arm. I moved uneasily and moaned.

"God be praised!" said Hamed, bending over me, "your fate is not to die, like that of Mustafa and his two brothers."

"Mustafa dead!" I answered. "Why, what has happened?"

"Does not my master remember we were in the vineyards when the sons of Satan set on us, and the master's horse was shot, and he fought against two villains as if he were a very Rustem?"

Instantly the whole scene of our surprise flashed upon me, and I asked what had been the result, and if we were prisoners.

"Prisoners? no, master, we are not prisoners. The sons of dogs—may their graves be defiled!—are all dead and their heads are outside. I will show them to the master if he wishes."

I was burning with fever, and my throat and mouth were so parched that I could scarcely speak. Though I much wished to learn the news, I was obliged to ask Hamed to get me some water; and while he left me to do so I tried to collect my ideas. With my left hand I felt my head, which I found was bound up with a

bandage clotted with blood. I could feel that my right shoulder was hurt, and there was also a sense of stiffness and discomfort in my left side, while my whole body was aching as if I had been bruised all over.

I soon began to remember the assault that had been made on us. We had been both surprised and outnumbered, and I could not imagine how we had escaped from our assailants, who, when I lost consciousness, had decidedly been getting the better of us.

"But, Hamed," I said, when he returned with water, "how is it that we are here? The robbers had the better of us."

"Verily that is truth," he replied; "but when Mustafa and two more of my brothers were dead, and the master laid upon the ground as if he were dead also, I and those that were left threw down our arms. The thieves then commenced to ransack our saddles and baggage for plunder. Whilst they were so engaged they kept no watch; and a bey, who is going to Urfa with a body of forty men, fell upon them, and they were all cut down before they could resist."

I asked who and what this bey was; but Hamed could tell me nothing except that he was called Skander Bey, and that he was said to be a great man.

I thought if he were a great man he would perhaps have some one among his train who would be able to attend to my wounds, and I begged Hamed to go and ask if he had. But Hamed said that we were close to the baths, which, indeed, could be reached from the cara-

vanserai without going out into the streets, and that he would go there and fetch a barber, who would at once attend to my hurts and those of the remaining three of our companions, who were in another cell of the caravanserai like the one in which I was lying.

Hamed was not long absent. When he returned he was accompanied by an old man dressed in white, who was followed by others bearing vessels full of hot water, towels, brass basins, and other paraphernalia, which they disposed about my apartment. Then without more ado they stripped me naked, though to do so they had to cut away my clothes where they were sticking to my wounds with clotted blood.

I was helpless in their hands, but was soon pleased and relieved to find that the old man was a skilful surgeon, though he claimed only the humbler title of barber. The wound in my side was a mere graze, though it had bled a great deal. It was easily dressed and bound up. The one in my shoulder was more serious, a bullet having passed through from front to rear, just above the collar-bone, fortunately without injuring it. This wound apparently required more attention; for the barber, not satisfied with merely binding it up, first poured in some hot oil, which caused me exquisite torture.

These two wounds having been attended to, the old man now shaved my head, so as to be able to examine more carefully what damage it had received. Finding nothing but a big bruise, and the skin broken, he

contented himself with putting on some cooling dressing.

His attendants now, under his directions, washed me all over, and rubbed my limbs and body in so skilful a manner that I felt immediate relief. When they had finished I was wrapped up in clean linen cloths, and the barber gave me a cup of some warm liquid to drink, which had the effect of causing me to sleep almost immediately.

CHAPTER XIII.

SKANDER BEY.

WHEN next I awoke I found that I was much more at ease. Though my shoulder was very stiff and pained me considerably, I was able to get up and walk about. Hamed, who was unremitting in his attentions to me, aided me to dress, that I might go and see Skander Bey, who with all his followers was lodged in the caravanserai.

As soon as I was ready, I sent a message to the bey asking his permission to pay my respects to him and thank him for rescuing me from the hands of my assailants. When I came into the room where he was, to my great astonishment I found, instead of a martial-looking man, as I had expected, a lad of about twelve years old sitting upon a pile of cushions and attended by some seven or eight persons.

At first I thought there had been some mistake; but a man who was standing by the boy came forward and led me up to him. I bowed, and said I had come to thank him for the assistance he had rendered me.

Pulling me down on the cushions beside him, he replied that it was the duty of all good Moslems to assist those in distress.

Coffee and chibouques were now brought in, Skander Bey smoking as well as his attendants. A long conversation ensued, my young host being very eager to hear about different countries and peoples, and evincing great intelligence in the questions that he put to me.

When he heard that I was going to Urfa, he said that he would be happy if I would travel with him, as he was going there to visit his uncle; and that, as it had been his good fortune to rescue me from death, I must even now consider myself as his guest.

I thanked the bey, but could scarcely believe that he could settle such things without referring to some of the men by whom he was surrounded. But when I noted the respect and deference with which they all treated him, I could not but see that he was in word and deed his own master. Still I own that when this lad of twelve talked of his harem, saying that he was tired and was going to his women's rooms, I was fairly astonished.

He then dismissed me with great courtesy. I was accompanied to my room by one of the men who had been present during our interview, and whom I immediately assailed with all sorts of questions.

This man, I found, was a sort of steward or overseer to the young bey, and had filled the same position to the lad's father, who had been killed in a fight with

some Arabs which had arisen out of a question of rights of pasturage the year before. The young bey was now going to his maternal uncle, who was one of the principal inhabitants of Urfa, to urge him to pray the wali of Aleppo to punish the Arabs who had killed his father. These, it seemed, lived in the wali's territory; and not belonging to the purely nomadic tribes, but gaining a portion of their livelihood by agriculture, they had no right whatever to pasture their flocks to the east of the Euphrates, where the fight had taken place.

I said I was sorry to hear of the lad's loss. Full of curiosity about the harem I had heard mentioned, I asked if it were possible that so young a bey was married.

The grave features of my companion relaxed into a smile as he said, "Married! no! Though you are a Frank and Giaour, you must know that it is not right for a man to mention the females of his household by name. The harem of Skander Bey consists of his mother and sister and their slaves. His marriage, however, must take place soon; for he is the chief of our family, and it is only proper and fitting that he should have a wife. I hear that his uncle has a moon-faced, almond-eyed daughter, a very partridge for plumpness, to whom I doubt not he will cause his nephew to be betrothed."

My companion, who I found was by no means a bad fellow, soon after this left me. Presently he returned,

followed by two slaves, one of whom carried a copper dish full of a pillau of lamb, pistachio nuts, and raisins, and the other a large bottle of wine.

"Come," he said; "though you are wounded you can eat and drink. It will make up for the blood you have lost."

I was surprised to see wine carried so openly, and could not help expressing my astonishment.

"Oh!" said my friend, "in a caravanserai no one is known, and no one knows what another does; and besides, the wine is brought for you."

Notwithstanding my wounds I managed to make a very fair meal, though I did not dare drink more than a very little of the wine, which was strong and well-flavoured. My companion, however, fully made up for any abstinence on my part; indeed his devotions to the bottle continued until it was almost exhausted. Then, having become rather fuddled, he declared his intention of sleeping in my room, and ordered one of the slaves to bring his sleeping-rugs and pillows there. He was soon asleep and breathing heavily.

I lay awake for hours wondering much at the various turns of fortune that had occurred to me. After a time I became feverish and light-headed. At one time I imagined that I was alone on board the *Antelope*, which was in flames, and that I was unable to move while I saw the fire gradually creeping nearer and nearer to me. Then I fancied I was engaged in a desperate conflict with a fierce band of robbers, or ex-

posed to severe frost and cold on the mountains of Armenia.

I do not know how long this continued, but I must at last have fallen asleep; for the next thing I remembered was being awakened by the faithful Hamed, who had brought me a bowl of sherbet to drink, which, parched as I was with fever, was most grateful to me.

I found that the steward of Skander Bey had already risen and gone out. Hamed said that he was gone to find me a tak-tarawan, as he had said my wounds would prevent my riding for a few days, and that therefore I should have to travel as a woman.

I said to Hamed that I could not understand how it was that Skander Bey and his party were so kind to me, and that I hoped they would not expect to be repaid by me; for, as he well knew, I had only sufficient money with me to pay my expenses as far as Urfa, and that at a very modest rate.

Hamed answered that I need not trouble myself about that; for George Boyajan was known throughout all the country, and had agents in every town, though he might not have told me all about them, and that he had great influence with many of the Turkish officials. No doubt, he said, the attendants of the young bey had told him that by befriending me he would make a friend of Boyajan. I need not therefore bother my head about repayment, as Skander Bey would be sure to get value in one way or another for what he did for me.

I now asked Hamed to tell me something of the fight when the bey and his party had come to our assistance. He said that the first he had seen of our rescue was the lad himself at the head of his men riding down upon the robbers, one of whom he struck dead at his feet.

To me the idea of a mere boy like Skander Bey killing a man seemed astonishing. But Hamed said that his whole family were renowned for skill in the use of arms, and that as soon as a boy could sit in a saddle he was taught to handle sword, spear, and gun. He added that on the road I should doubtless have an opportunity of seeing how skilful the bey was.

I now asked Hamed what was the condition of his two surviving comrades. He replied that they were doing as well as possible, but that they would have to remain at Severeke, where they had friends, until our return on our way back to Diarbekir, when they would rejoin us.

Said, as I found the steward of the bey was called, now came back, and interrupting our conversation said he had made arrangements for a tak-tarawan to be ready for me on the following morning, when we should all start early. Then noticing that I seemed restless and uncomfortable, he sent for the barber who had dressed my wounds the day before to come and attend to them again. He was as before accompanied by men who bathed and shampooed me, as the rubbing of my body and limbs was called. He told me that when the

fresh dressings had been applied I need be under no fear; for my head and side were nearly better, and the wound in my shoulder, which was the most serious of the three, looked well, and was healing kindly.

However, as he found that I was still rather feverish, he ordered Hamed to make a mixture of tamarinds and water for me to drink, and sent for his cupping apparatus to draw a little blood from me. This was done in a somewhat rude and primitive manner. He simply scarified the back of my neck, put a bullock's horn over the place, and sucked away through a hole at the small end until he had exhausted the air inside. Then by a dexterous management with his tongue of a piece of bees' wax which he had in his mouth, he plugged the hole, and the horn stuck to my neck.

After a few minutes he considered I had lost enough of blood. Removing the wax, the horn came off quite easily, and I found that about a quarter of a pint of blood had been drawn from me by its application. Certainly I felt much relief from his operations.

When he had left, I, with Hamed's aid, overhauled my saddle and baggage, and was delighted to find that, though my scanty stock of clothes had been rummaged and were soiled and torn, nothing was missing, and all my papers and letters were safe. This was indeed a piece of good fortune.

As soon as I had packed up all again ready for starting, I went with Hamed to visit his wounded comrades. I found that the bey's people had taken good care of

them, and that they were now so comfortable that they apparently looked upon the injuries which had landed them in such good quarters as a great piece of good luck. When I told them that their pay would be continued during my absence at Urfa, their delight was unbounded, and they showered all manner of blessings on my head.

CHAPTER XIV.

HAWKING AND HUNTING.

NEXT morning Hamed and Saïd came to me betimes, and I got up and went down into the courtyard of the caravanserai, which I found to be a scene of bustle and confusion. The followers of the bey were busy saddling their horses, muleteers were loading their animals, and tak-tarawans were being got ready for the ladies of the bey's family, their female attendants, and myself.

These tak-tarawans are covered litters, with the sides and ends fitted with leather curtains which can be closed or opened at the wish of the occupant. Resting on two long tough poles, between which two mules are harnessed, one in front and one behind, and being well provided with carpets and cushions, they form a speedy and most luxurious mode of conveyance.

I found that Hamed had carefully prepared my tak-tarawan. From the roof hung an earthen jar full of water, and packets containing provisions, in case I should be hungry or thirsty on the road.

For Skander Bey there was saddled a beautiful Arab horse, while others were led by grooms in case he should wish to change his steed. Other men were in charge of some beautiful greyhounds like our English ones, except that their ears were fringed with silky hair, as were also their hind-quarters and tails. Three men, who seemed proud of their charge, carried on their gloved left hands hooded hawks, in readiness if their master should wish to indulge in the sport of hawking by the way.

I wished to wait before getting into my litter to pay my respects to the young bey before starting. This, however, I found I could not do, as the litters and baggage animals were to start first, escorted by some twenty horsemen, and the bey and the chiefs of his retinue would come on afterwards and catch us up on the road.

After some little disputing and wrangling among the muleteers as to who should lead the way, the caravan got into order, and winding through the muddy and narrow streets of the town, we soon emerged into the open country. I found the motion of the litter most soothing, and presently went to sleep. I slept until I was roused by the voice of Skander Bey, who was riding by my side, asking me how I fared.

I thanked him for all his kindness, and could not help admiring the gallant boy and the skill and ease with which he managed his fiery steed. Indeed he was a pleasing sight to look upon, dressed in the height

of Kurdish fashion. On his head was an extravagantly high peaked felt bonnet, round which was wound a gaudy silk handkerchief, partly confining his long black hair, which fell in curls on his neck. On his body he wore a sleeveless coat of black bearskin, which, open in front, showed a coloured silk shirt fastened up with silver clasps. This shirt had long open sleeves floating in the wind, showing underneath other sleeves of red silk, which fitted close to his arms. Round his waist was an embroidered belt with tasselled ends. This belt supported a filigree box for bullets and a handsomely-mounted yataghan. His dress was completed by baggy breeches of blue and white striped stuff, tucked into red morocco boots with turned-up toes, the boots reaching to his knees.

The trappings of his horse were in keeping with his own costume. Across his saddle-bow he carried a long matchlock, the barrel of which was damascened and the wood-work inlaid with silver and ivory. A huge turquoise as big as a pigeon's egg was set into the butt as a sure bringer of good fortune.

Nor were his followers in their appearance unworthy of their young chief, being all handsomely dressed; and the whole cavalcade made a most gallant appearance.

We managed to keep up a conversation for some time. He asked me what I thought of his hounds and hawks, and if in my country people amused themselves with coursing and hawking.

I answered that in my country such amusements

belonged solely to the rich people and the nobility; and that as from my early youth I had been accustomed to a seafaring life I knew little about them. I added that though I was no judge of the merits of hounds and hawks, still his were most beautiful, and that I had no doubt their performances, when opportunity offered, would be equal to their looks.

From hounds and hawks he went on to talk of horses and arms; and afterwards plied me with all sorts of questions about ships and the sea. When at last he seemed tired of talking, he exhibited the paces of his steed and his skill in horsemanship.

About six in the evening we halted for the night at a small village, and here every provision was made for my comfort. After supper the bey came to see me again, and said it was a pity I could not mount a horse. On the following morning it was very probable that we should come across some hares and gazelles, and then he would be able to show me how good his hawks and hounds were. He would be only too glad, he said, to give me a horse, that I might join in the sport, if I felt at all able to ride.

I felt so much better that I was almost ashamed of travelling like a woman in a *tak-tarawan*, and gladly accepted Skander Bey's offer. I begged, however, that I should be mounted on a temperate steed, and not on a fiery barb like the one he managed with so much skill and dexterity, for my right shoulder was still stiff and painful, and prevented me from using my arm.

In accordance with this wish, on the following morning I was mounted on a gray mare, which I was told was eighteen years old. The only symptom of her age, however, was to be found in her subdued temper, for I discovered that in speed and endurance she was fully equal to many of the younger and more fiery horses of my fellow-travellers.

The tak-tarawans and the baggage animals, guarded by a sufficient escort, set out along the Tarik-el-Sultan, or Sultan's Road, as my companions named in derision the track worn by the passage of caravans of pack animals; while Skander Bey and the remainder of our party turned away to the right to look for game.

After we had ridden about an hour we spread ourselves out into a long line, with an interval of about twenty yards between the horsemen, to look for hares. Before we had gone a quarter of a mile I heard a cry of "Arnib, arnib!" and looking in the direction of the cry I saw a hare bounding away before us. The dogs were instantly slipped, and we all rode furiously after them. In a few minutes poor puss's fate was sealed. The same thing occurred some half-a-dozen times, the only variation being that two of the hares escaped from their pursuers.

The old mare carried me beautifully, and though the ground was very rough and full of cracks and holes, she never made a mistake nor a stumble; indeed I might almost have been sitting in an arm-chair.

Skander Bey came to ask what I now thought of

his hounds. I was replying with a few words of praise when our conversation was interrupted by a shout of "Sa'alab!" and a fine fox bounded away almost from under our horses' feet, and in a few seconds the hounds were flying after him.

Mister Reynard was not so inoffensive as the hares. Time after time as a hound came up with him he turned and snapped at the dog, showing a formidable row of teeth, which the younger hounds, that were leading, evidently did not care to encounter. Two older hounds, however, which had been rather behind the rest of the pack, soon ran up one on each side of the fox, and as he turned to snap at one, the other took the opportunity to rush in and seize him by the nape of the neck. In an instant fox and hounds were rolling over and over in mortal combat.

The young bey jumped from his horse with the speed of lightning, and drawing a knife, rushed to the assistance of his beloved dogs, and soon put an end to the conflict. Cutting off the brush, he came and tied it to the bridle of my horse, bowing graciously as he did so.

We had not yet finished our amusement for the day, however; for we soon saw one of the leading horsemen, who had just arrived at the top of a small hill, signing to us to be quiet and advance cautiously, and word was passed back that a herd of gazelles was feeding on the other side of the hill.

Skander Bey said he was sorry indeed that the hounds were tired by their previous runs, as he had

much wished to see if two of them, which had never before been tried at gazelle-hunting, could, as he hoped, prove fleet enough to pull one down.

"Why, what is the good then of going after these gazelles?" I asked.

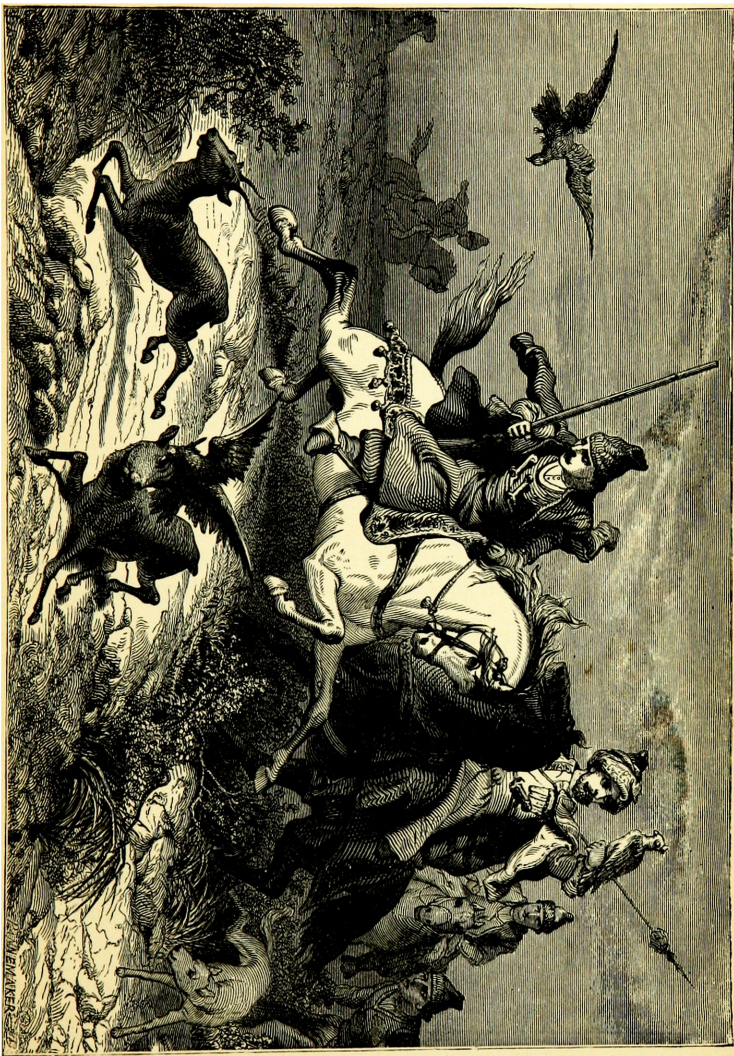
He smiled, and answered, "Know, my friend, that few greyhounds—not one in fifty—are as fleet as a gazelle; and when the ground is dry, they have no chance, and therefore we avail ourselves of the hawks."

He now called for one of his hawks, and putting on his hawking-glove, perched the bird on his wrist; while Saïd and others of his followers took the rest. The hounds, which had been running loose, were now again led.

We rode quietly to the top of the hill. When we arrived there we saw seven gazelles feeding about five hundred yards from us, one being stationed as a sentinel on the top of a small hillock.

A few moments elapsed before the vigilant eyes of the sentinel caught sight of us as we peered over the crest of the hill. When he did, he threw up his head and stamped sharply with his fore feet, at which signal all his companions ceased feeding and commenced closing together. In another second the buck which had been keeping guard gave two bounds in the air, and the whole herd set off as fast as they could.

The hawks were now unhooded and cast off, the hounds were slipped from the leash, and we all set off helter-skelter down the hill. Each of the hawks singled



HUNTING GAZELLES.

out its own quarry, and flew straight for it; but so swift were the gazelles that it was fully five minutes ere the hawks, lighting on their heads and blinding them with claw, beak, and wing, hindered their headlong flight, and gave an opportunity to the hounds to close upon them.

The unfortunate gazelles, though attacked in such an extraordinary manner, made a brave fight. They struck their heads against the ground, and beat at the hawks with front and hind hoofs; but all their efforts to dislodge them were fruitless, and the advent of the hounds speedily put an end to the unequal conflict.

Skander Bey was in great delight at the day's sport. When hawks and hounds had been rewarded, and the gazelles strapped behind the saddles of his grooms, he came and rode beside me, and asked what I thought of the day's amusement.

I could not but say that I had been highly entertained. At the same time, I could not but consider that the unfortunate gazelles had had scant justice afforded them. "The hawks," I said, "might perhaps have been beaten off; but against hawks and hounds together they could have no chance."

He laughed, and said that his hawks were too precious to allow them to be injured, as often happened when the hounds were long in coming up. To have let the latter go after the gazelles by themselves would have been to give them a long and tiring run without a prospect of success; and would not only have tired

them without reason, but would also have discouraged them so much that it would have taken the heart out of them in any future chase after gazelles. "And, after all," he said, "is not the end of war to destroy your enemies—of the chase, to obtain your quarry?" To this I did not know what to answer.

We now all rode on after the caravan—Hamed, who was always in close attendance on me, expatiating on the wealth, greatness, and generosity of Skander Bey and his family. We soon found the road running up a valley between ranges of hills, with here and there a few patches of cultivation and some Kurdish huts. After a time we had to climb the hills themselves. On the summit, in a sheltered place, we found a village in which was a large house belonging to an Armenian. He was reputed to be very wealthy, and managed to live in comparative security by aiding the Kurdish chiefs with loans of money when their extravagant mode of life had brought them into difficulties.

Here we found the caravan had halted for the night, and the Armenian, who was an old friend of Skander Bey's father, had prepared lodgings for all of us. The bey himself and his principal people were taken into a large hall in the house, at one end of which was a huge hearth and chimney where a fire was blazing and crackling. All down the sides of this hall were earthen benches covered with carpets and cushions; and here we were invited to rest ourselves, and coffee was handed round.

Gregorio, as I heard the Armenian called, when he found I was a friend of Boyajan's, thought nothing too good for me. Though the meal he had prepared for us was ample for twice our number, he bustled about, and in and out of the women's quarters, ordering additions to be made, until it became a veritable feast. Besides soup, pillaus, roasted fowls, pigeons, and all sorts of solid food, there were sweetmeats, grapes preserved fresh underground from the last vintage, and oranges from Tripoli. When all was finished, chibouques were produced for a smoke. These were charged with the choicest tobacco of Latakia, which had been a voyage to Egypt and back, and without which, in the opinion of connoisseurs, its most delicate flavour cannot be produced.

I was by no means sorry when all the eating and smoking were over. Though my wounds did not seem to have suffered from the exertion of riding, I was still weak and was very tired; and when I saw Gregorio and the bey roll themselves up in their cloaks and lie down on the divan, I lost no time in following their example.

CHAPTER XV.

OSMAN OGLOU.

NEXT day we rode through several villages situated on running brooks whose banks were fringed with groves of poplar trees. At the last of these villages we found messengers from Skander Bey's uncle, who had been sent to say that he and a party of his friends would meet us outside the gates of Urfa.

This, of course, had been expected, but it seemed to be received with surprise. A halt was called, and every one set to work to smarten himself up for the anticipated meeting; while the bey was called to the tak-tarawans which contained his harem to give the inmates the news, and doubtless also to receive hints as to how he was to bear himself as the head of the house when he met his uncle, whom he had not seen since his father's death.

The preparations did not take long, and when they were completed we rode on again. Soon, from the top of a hill, we saw a broad plain, with mountains on either hand, in which was a large walled city. The

plain was that of Haran, for some time the dwelling-place of Abraham ; and the city was Urfa, or Edessa, famous in history and in many a legend, where Baldwin, brother of Godfrey de Bouillon, founded in 1097 a principality which endured for the space of fifty-four years.

Towering high above the rest of the city I could see two lofty columns. About these I was afterwards told a story, which I will relate in its proper place. Soon we saw issuing from one of the gates a long train of horsemen, and we pressed on our way to meet them.

As the two parties drew near to each other men galloped out from the ranks on either side, firing their guns and pistols, and waving their lances and swords. As they came still closer the number of these skirmishers became greater, and soon the play of the *jerid* commenced between the two parties. Nearly all were dashing about engaged in this mimic warfare, casting *jerids* (darts) at each other, wheeling to avoid them, and fleeing and pursuing in turn, some even stooping from the saddle at full speed to pick up a *jerid* from the ground. Skander Bey entered into the sport with great spirit, and though so young seemed to the full as skilful as his older companions. Once I actually saw him turn, after dodging a dart thrown at him, and catch it in his hand as it flew past.

I was much interested in this display of skill and horsemanship, and for some time paid no attention to the principal people among those who had come out

from the city to meet us. After a little, however, I looked towards them, and two among them seemed strangely familiar to me. Who could they be? I had no friends among the Turks that I could think of who would be living at Urfa. Still that long flowing white beard of one I had surely seen somewhere before. Suddenly it flashed upon me that its possessor was Abdul Akbar, who had used my cabin on the passage from Malta to Alexandretta, and that his companion was Osman Oglou.

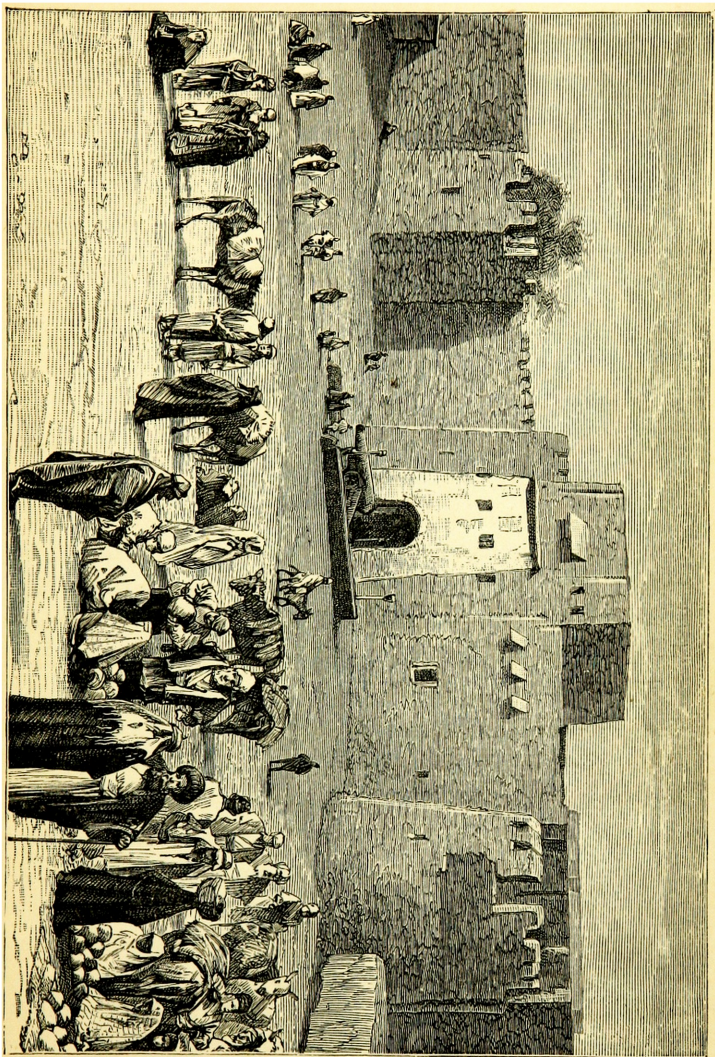
The play of the jerid was now over, and I saw Osman Oglou and Skander Bey dismount and embrace each other, so that doubtless the uncle of my new friend was our former passenger on board the *Antelope*.

When they had remounted, the bey spoke to Saïd, who was riding by him, and told him to call me up to be presented to his uncle. I at once answered to the call, and Skander Bey shortly recounted the circumstances of our meeting, and said that he hoped he would befriend me during my stay in Urfa.

Osman Oglou promised to do so. Then looking at me long and steadily, he said, "It seems that thy features are known to me, and that I have seen thee in some other place, but when and under what circumstances I know not."

I at once said that he and Abdul Akbar had come from Malta in the *Antelope*, and that on the voyage they had used my cabin.

He said, "True; I now remember thee. But how



GATE OF URFA.

comes it that thou, a sailor and a Giaour from the islands of the west, art here as an agent of Boyajan the Armenian?"

As briefly as I could I told him of the sickness on board the *Antelope* and of her subsequent loss; how I had been taken prisoner by the inhabitants of the island on which I had been cast away, and had been sold as a slave to Ali Khan; how we had been made prisoners by Kara Yusuf; and how at Erzeroum I had met Boyajan.

He said, "The ways of the Almighty are strange. I am here in my own country, and can help thee." He then called Abdul Akbar, and told him to look after me.

By this time we were entering the gate of the town. After passing through some narrow streets, which were as dirty as those of most Eastern towns, we rode through a lofty archway into a large square, with several trees growing in it. On three sides were houses almost palatial in their size and appearance, and which had been built, as Abdul Akbar told me, by the Franks during the time of their rule. The fourth side was occupied by a high wall, in which was the archway through which we had passed, and which was flanked on either side by small buildings, apparently used as guard-rooms.

All this was the property of Osman Oglou, who, I found, preferred to live in Urfa rather than in Aleppo or on his estates. He was the most important person in

the place, the kaimacan or governor being looked upon as quite beneath him in dignity and influence.

One of the palatial houses was placed at the disposal of Skander Bey and his mother and sister, close by the one where Osman Oglou lived himself. The remainder of his retinue, with his horses, hounds, and hawks, were distributed among those of his uncle. Indeed there was no difficulty in finding lodging for all of us ; for though there must have been over two hundred of Osman Oglou's people living in these old houses, there was plenty of room for as many more without any crowding or inconvenience.

Abdul Akbar took me to his own house, which was also next to that of Osman Oglou, but on the other side to that where the young bey was quartered. Leading me into a couple of large and luxuriously appointed rooms on the first floor, overlooking the square, he told me that during my stay in Urfa I was to consider them as my home, and that two negro slaves would be always in attendance in the corridor outside and would be ever at my beck and call. Hamed was also lodged near me, and when before I went to sleep that night he came to see that I lacked for nothing, he was loud in his astonishment at the magnificence and luxury of our surroundings ; for never before had he been inside the house of a great noble, and had looked upon the hut of a Kurdish peasant, or the bare white-washed rooms provided for travellers in caravanserais, as the height of comfort.

CHAPTER XVI.

A RIDE THROUGH URFA.

EARLY the next morning I was waited upon by Boyajan's correspondent, and was engaged for several hours on the business which had brought me to Urfa. He said he was glad indeed to see that I was under the protection of Osman Oglou, and hoped that he himself might benefit by it. He urged me, if I found an opportunity, to speak to Abdul Akbar and try to make arrangements by which he, as agent for Boyajan, might supply Osman Oglou with all the Eastern luxuries he required, which he now purchased at exorbitant rates from local merchants, and after they had been filtered through the hands of many middlemen; also that Abdul Akbar might give him a preference in buying the wool, raisins, wheat, and other produce of his master's vast estates.

When our business was finished he invited me to come for a ride with him through the town. First of all, as what he considered the most interesting thing to show me, he took me to a large and splendid bazaar,

where were congregated Persians, Armenians, Genoese, Venetians, and even some traders from the Indies. Here goods of all sorts were to be obtained. My companion was evidently looked upon as an important personage by those who composed the busy throng; and he did not fail to speak of me to those he met as the agent of Boyajan, and the friend of Osman Oglou and Skander Bey.

As I have already said, I had been much struck on first seeing the town by the two tall columns which stood on a small eminence covered with ruins at its southern end. I now asked my companion if I could not have a closer view of them, to which he readily assented, and leaving the bustling bazaar we went on to where they stood.

I should be afraid to say what was the height of the columns, but never do I remember having seen higher ones. They were beautiful specimens of what I have since learned is the Corinthian order of Greek architecture, their fluted shafts and elaborately carved capitals showing but few signs of injury. As we stood at their base I noticed, about a bowshot from the bottom of the hill, two green gardens, in which were some buildings kept in good repair. In each of the gardens was a pond from which issued a small stream; and these streams, after flowing for a short distance, joined their waters together. I also saw a number of men in the dress of dervishes walking about in these gardens. Asking my companion what these places were, he told



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me that they were the Springs of Abraham; and that being considered sacred by the Mohammedans, they were guarded by these dervishes, who lived on the gifts of the pious and charitable. I asked what he meant by the Springs of Abraham, and he said that if I chose he would take me to them, and that the dervishes would tell me the legend connected with them.

We accordingly rode down to the nearer of the gardens. Leaving our horses at the entrance in the care of Hamed—who never quitted me, being, as he said, responsible since the death of Mustafa for my safe return to Diarbekir—and giving a small present to a dervish who was sitting at the gate, we went in.

I found that the pond was full of fish of extraordinary fatness, and was remarking on this to my friend, when the chief of the dervishes came up to us and asked what we wanted.

My companion explained that I wished to know the story of the Springs of Abraham, on which the dervish related the following legend, which I give as nearly as possible in his own words:—

“Know, O stranger! that this is one of the wonders of the world, and a proof of how Allah watches over his faithful servants. Abraham, a prophet beloved of the Lord, lived here in Haran, and his righteous soul was vexed by the idolatry of the people. Nimrod, a mighty hunter and a king in the land, was at times a friend of the blessed prophet and at times an enemy. Abraham from day to day lifted up his voice against

the worshipping of idols, whose temples were built on the hill where you see those two lofty columns; and he upbraided Nimrod, who had knowledge of better things, with permitting and sharing in the senseless adoration of stocks and stones. Nimrod one day was seized with anger and wrath against Abraham, and determined to compass his death. He therefore ordered his soldiers to seize the prophet and bind him.

“And Nimrod commanded his sorcerers and wizards, and they caused those two columns to arise. Between them was a rope hanging nearly to the ground, and on this rope the prophet was placed. And the soldiers and servants of Nimrod collected firewood and made a mighty fire here where we stand; it was so large that it extended also to where the other spring is. The fire was exceeding fierce, and the flames slew many of the people of Nimrod.

“But the hearts of the heathen were harder than stone, and they swung the prophet between the two columns, and launched him into the air, that he might fall into the fire and be utterly consumed. But behold the goodness of God! The prophet prayed earnestly while in the hands of his enemies and persecutors; he prayed while he was being hurled through the air: and his prayers were answered. As Nimrod and his people saw the prophet fall into the fire they set up a mighty shout of triumph. But their triumph was turned into astonishment and woe; for, behold, as Abraham alighted on the ground he was in the attitude

of prayer, the flames had no power upon him, and from the places where his knees touched the earth issued two streams, which are those that you now see in this and the other garden.

“And Allah changed all the people of Nimrod who had been engaged in the persecution of Abraham into fishes, and they continue in the springs unto this day. That this history is true, the presence of the fishes is a proof.”

When the dervish had finished speaking, I thanked him. Noticing that several persons were buying bread and throwing it to the fishes, I followed their example and fed the people of Nimrod. I then made a present to the old dervish, and left the place.

When we had remounted our horses my companion said: “See how these Moslems believe any fable. Those columns were not built in the days of Nimrod; and if the knees of Abraham made the two springs, he must have been taller than the hill, for they are forty yards apart. But if you, as a Christian, want to know something of the history of Edessa, I will relate it to you.”

I at once replied that I would be only too glad to learn anything, and he said: “Know, then, that in the days when the Son of God was on earth there was a king who reigned over Edessa who was named Abgarus. He was a leper; and people who came to his court told him that in the land of Judea there was a Prophet who healed the sick, the blind, the lame, and the leper. He made inquiries about him, and prepared mighty

gifts, and gave them to the chief of his household, and told him to travel into the land of Judea and find out this Prophet, that he might speak the word and heal him.

“The chief of his household took horse and travelled into Judea. And the fame of our Lord was waxed great in the land, and the chief found him preaching in the temple at Jerusalem. He came unto him, and falling down begged him to accept the gifts of Abgarus, the king of Edessa, and cause him to be cleansed from his leprosy and made whole like other men.

“Our Saviour said that the bounty of God was not to be bought, but that faith and good works were pleasing to the Almighty.

“The servant of Abgarus was sore grieved when he heard this; but he believed the words spoken to him. All the gifts he had brought he gave to the poor, and all that he had belonging to himself he also gave away. And again he cried to our Saviour to have mercy upon his master and heal him.

“Our Saviour took pity on him, and taking a cloth from the hand of his disciple Thomas, he wiped his face with it; and lo! a marvellous thing occurred: on the cloth appeared an imprint of the sacred face of our Lord.

“Our Lord then said to the servant of Abgarus, ‘Take this to thy master, and let him look on it and believe that I am the Son of God, and he shall be whole.’

“The servant of Abgarus did as he was commanded. And Abgarus, when he beheld the holy image, believed, and became whole from that very hour. He and all his people became Christians; and thus Urfa was the first city in which all the people were Christians.

“This holy relic was preserved for many years, and always protected the people of Urfa from the hands of their enemies. But their faith waxed cold; and when one day, while they were besieged by the Turks, they went to invoke its aid, behold it had vanished. There are those who say that one day it will be seen again, and then the religion of the Cross will be triumphant. Say, my friend, is not this a better story than the silly fable of the dervish?”

I thanked my companion for his story, and said that I had heard something similar before, but that I did not know that Urfa had been so blessed. This he took as showing that I fully believed him, and was satisfied that he had proved the superiority of Christians to Mohammedans.

My business for Boyajan took some little time to complete, and I was in Urfa altogether for about three weeks. During this time I was able to send a letter to the agent of the Turkey Merchants at Aleppo, and received an answer from him saying that he would cause intelligence of my safety and well-being to be sent to my parents in England.

This took a weight off my mind, for I feared they might be mourning me as dead. It was with a light

heart therefore that I set out on my return to Diarbekir, now completely recovered from my wounds, and escorted by a party of men sent by Osman Oglou, who would not hear of any recompense being made him for this service, and who also loaded me with presents, for which I could make no return. Indeed I could only repay him and the young bey for all their kindness to me with thanks and good wishes.

At Severek we found Hamed's companions ready to travel. When we arrived at Diarbekir, George Boyajan had just returned from his visit to Jezireh; and we immediately set about our preparations for the journey to Bassorah.

CHAPTER XVII.

A RACE FOR LIFE.

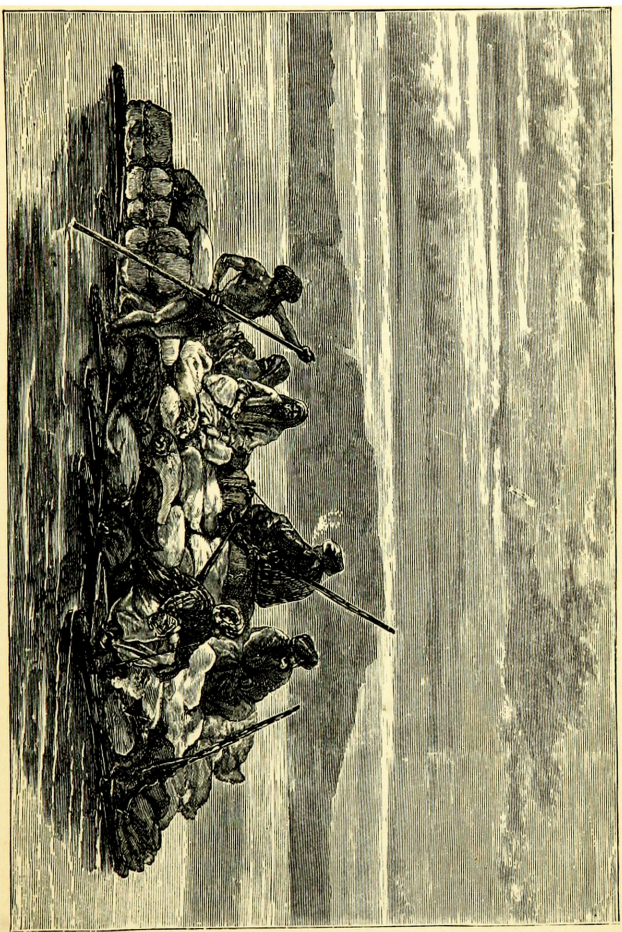
BOYAJAN had collected so much merchandise in Diarbekir that he decided to convey it down the Tigris on kelluks, or rafts of inflated skins. He wished me, with a Kurdish guide in whom he could place trust and with my faithful Hamed, to ride by way of the cities of Mardin and Nisibin and deliver letters to agents he had in both these places. Thereafter, making the best of my way to Mosul, I was to meet him in that city.

I at once agreed to do what he wished; and having seen him start on his rafts, of which he had four, all guarded by men armed with matchlocks for fear of attack by the natives, I set out for Mardin with my Kurdish guide and Hamed.

Skirting the eastern slopes of the Karaja Dagħ, we made our way across a rough and mountainous country to the famous fortress of Mardin. It was already dark when we arrived. Next morning I was astonished at the wonderful view which I beheld from the citadel, to which my host conducted me. Northwards was a

rough and rugged mountainous country ; while southwards, far below us, spread the plain of Mesopotamia. The view to the south-east was bounded by the Sinjar range, the home of the Yezidis, or devil-worshippers ; while nearer to us smoked the mysterious volcanic cone of Kaukab. Many small mounds or *tels* showed where cities had once stood in the midst of a fertile, cultivated, and populous plain, but which now was a desert waste roamed over by wandering Arabs. A few small and wretched villages, inhabited by Christians of the Armenian Church, who, despoiled in turn by Kurd and Arab, dragged on a precarious existence, were all the signs, save these *tels* and a few ruins, of the civilization of former days.

Mardin, perched among its crags like the eyry of an eagle, enjoys the proud distinction of having been the only fortress that resisted the attacks of Tamerlane, the Tartar conqueror and captor of Bajazet, whose armies ravaged Asia from the Great Wall of China to the Mediterranean, and from the torrid clime of India to the ice and snows of Siberia. It is related that the Tartar monarch, despairing of reducing Mardin by the ordinary methods of siege or assault, resolved to starve the inhabitants into submission. Soon famine with all its dread attendants was rife within the walls ; and not only the horses of the soldiers, but the leather of the saddles and bridles, had been eaten. But knowing the fate of those who fell into the hands of their savage and relentless enemy, who was accustomed to make a



ONE OF BOYAJANS KELLUKS.

pyramid of the heads of the inhabitants of those cities that resisted him, the people of Mardin, abandoning all hope of relief, determined to die of hunger rather than surrender.

At last the sufferings of the inhabitants were so great that the governor was on the point of surrendering the town, when one of the soldiers, searching near a well for something which might somewhat relieve his hunger, heard the whining of a dog. Climbing over some stones, he found in a hidden corner a litter of puppies and their mother. Growing by their hiding-place were a few stalks of barley, of which the ears were already ripe.

An idea entered into the soldier's head, which, with the approval of the governor, was immediately carried out. What became of the puppies the story does not say, but their mother was milked, and of her milk a cheese was made; while the ears of barley were ground into flour and a cake of bread was baked. These were thrown over the wall to the soldiers of Tamerlane, who were derisively asked if in their camp they had such fresh bread and cheese as those the people of Mardin could afford to throw away. The bread and cheese, and the accompanying message, were conveyed to Tamerlane, who, supposing that the inhabitants, by some subterranean passage, were obtaining supplies from the open country, raised the siege, and the famished remnant of the people of the town had the pleasure of seeing the vast host of their savage enemy

streaming away to the eastward, never to return and molest them.

My business in Mardin was soon finished, being only to obtain answers to letters which I had brought with me. With my guide and Hamed I descended into the plain, and riding along the foot of the mountains we that night halted at Dareh, a city falsely ascribed by the natives to Darius, king of Persia, but which was really built by the Romans when their frontier post of Nisibin was taken from them. Judging by the ruins that remain, Dareh must have been of great strength and beauty; but I had no time to examine them.

Next morning we were in the saddle by daylight, and rode on to Nisibin, which lay a day's march to the eastward. None of the glories of the ancient city remain. The ramparts have vanished, and only a few mounds show its former extent. Among these mounds are two considerable villages, one inhabited by Kurds and the other by Armenian Christians. The country must have changed greatly since the days when the valiant warrior-bishop St. James of Nisibin discomfited the hosts of the Persians, and by means of a miraculous plague of flies turned back the elephants which were advancing to batter in the gates, to carry destruction among their own army; or when Trajan built a fleet here for the navigation of the Tigris.

I found the Armenian to whom I had brought letters in great distress, having been unable to collect for my friend Boyajan the wool which he had promised, for

the Tai Arabs had carried off all the flocks of the people. He assured me that it would be impossible for us to make our way direct to Mosul, as Kurds and Arabs were raiding on each other, and we would be sure to fall into the hands of one or other of them. In either case our fate would not be doubtful.

Our guide, when I consulted him, said it would be possible to reach Mosul if we exercised great caution. He was sure that he could guarantee us against the Kurds; but in order to avoid the Arabs we would have to travel by night, and when we halted in the day-time one of us would have to keep a sharp look-out for Arab ghazous, or raiding-parties.

In order to be thoroughly prepared to ride for our lives if need were, we rested for two days at Nisibin, giving our horses as much barley as they could eat, and overhauling their harness and our fire-arms with the greatest care.

Our first stage was but a short one to the village of Asnaur, where we found that the Christian inhabitants had done the best they could for their own safety, having sent their women, children, and cattle to the hills, and thrown in their lot with the Kurds who were their nearest neighbours.

If we had listened to these people, we should have given up all idea of proceeding on our journey. But our guide said that, a long march to the eastward, lay a castle belonging to a Kurdish chief, and that among his retainers he would find relations; and that if we

started immediately after nightfall, we should be in sight of the castle when the day broke. Accordingly, when the sun set, we tightened the girths of our saddles, saw to the priming of our fire-arms, and rode out into the darkness.

For three or four hours all went well, and then suddenly our guide's horse stopped. In a moment he was on his feet, wrapping his horse's head in his turban, and whispering eagerly to Hamed and me to do the same. Though we knew not what he meant, we lost no time in following his example. In a few moments we heard the neighing of a horse at no great distance right in front of us; and our guide told us that there must be a party of Arabs encamped by a stream which ran across our path, and in the midst of whom we should have been in a few minutes more if we had not halted.

We at once commenced to retrace our steps. But the ghazou had been disturbed, for we could hear the cries of men shouting to each other to look to their horses and arms. Fortunately they evidently did not know in what direction to search for us. When we had gone half a mile in perfect silence, our guide told us to mount and ride with him as hard as we could towards the north, in which direction there were some small hills, behind which we might resume our road eastward without being noticed by the Arabs.

We hastened on as fast as the darkness permitted us, till we had got round those hills, when we turned

again eastward. We rode on till daylight, and then our guide dismounted and went up to the top of a hill to see if he could discover anything of the Arabs, and also to make sure of our whereabouts.

He soon came running back and told us we must ride for our lives, for a party of Arabs, about ten or twelve in number, were making towards us. In about half an hour they would be sure to see us; while the castle of the Kurdish chief was still some two hours or more distant.

We urged our jaded steeds to their best pace; but soon, on looking back, we saw that we had been observed, and that the Arabs were in full pursuit. Seeing that we were only three in number, they did not keep together, but stretched out in a long and straggling line. Their horses being both swifter and fresher than ours, they gained on us rapidly. At last the leading man came within a hundred yards of us, and we could hear him shouting to us to stop. Our guide now sprang from his horse, blew the match of his gun, took a careful aim, and fired. The bullet took effect, and the Arab and his steed rolled over on the ground. Our guide speedily remounted, and we galloped on. In another half-hour, he said, we would be safe.

Two of the Arabs stayed by their fallen comrade, but the others pressed on after us. I tried to imitate our guide's lucky shot; but the bullet struck the ground some ten feet in front of the man I had aimed at, and soon the Arabs were close upon us. Our guide urged

us to flog our horses along; but just as I began to do so, my poor tired steed struck his foot against a stone, and came down, pitching me over his head.

I was soon on my feet, and got my pistols from my saddle, prepared to sell my life as dearly as possible. Hamed and our guide rode on, apparently regardless of my fate. In a minute or two the leading Arab came bearing down upon me, with his spear couched. Taking a steady aim, I fired, and wounded him so severely that he fell from the saddle. But my position seemed no better; for another succeeded him, and though I knocked him over also, I was alone on foot and defenceless against those who came after and were now rapidly closing on me.

I stood facing the Arabs as they came on, and managed to avoid the spear of the first by jumping to one side, but was knocked over by the man that followed, both horse and rider coming to the ground with me. I was half stunned by the shock, but had sufficient sense left me to grapple with my foe and prevent him drawing his dagger. His comrades, however, were soon off their horses, and came to his assistance.

I feared it was going to fare badly with me, when I heard the report of a gun and the whistle and thud of a bullet, and one of the Arabs, throwing up his arms, fell forward on his face dead. Instantly there was a great shouting among them, and leaving me, they jumped on their horses and galloped away, the bullets of a party of Kurds who had seen their pursuit

of us, and had hurried to our assistance, flying after them.

I regained my feet as quickly as I could, and looking round saw Hamed and our guide and about fifty of his countrymen, some on foot and some on horseback, coming towards me. I at once called Hamed and asked him why he had deserted me. In reply he said that even as my horse fell he had caught sight of the tall pointed caps of our new friends behind a rising ground, and had made toward them to call them to our assistance. If he and our guide had remained with me they could have been of no use, and would probably have lost their lives, as the men they had now brought up would have been too late to be of any use.

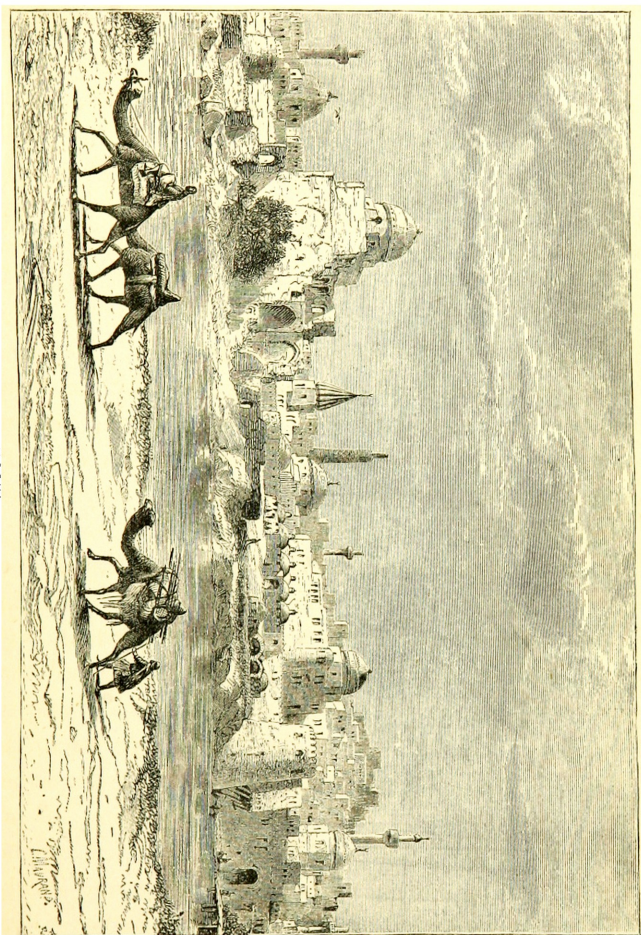
I was remounted on my horse; and soon after, we arrived at the Kurdish chief's castle, where we were most hospitably treated, and we remained a day to rest our horses.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DOWN THE TIGRIS.

WHEN we left the castle to resume our journey, a party of Kurds conducted us on our way for three days. Then telling us that if we used due precautions we would be safe, they left us to pursue our way alone to Mosul, where we arrived without any further adventure.

I went straight to the house where I expected to meet George Boyajan, but found that he and his kelluks had not yet arrived. His correspondent, however, made me right welcome, and showed me all that was to be seen of this modern representative of ancient Nineveh. On the side of the Tigris opposite to the modern town were a number of mounds, under which I was told the ruins of Nineveh lay hidden. In one of them tradition has placed the tomb of the prophet Jonah, who is said, after he had brought the inhabitants to repentance by his preaching, to have lived among them till he died full of years and honour. This mound was covered with the tombs of Moslems,



MOSUL.

it being considered a fortunate thing indeed to secure burial in so sacred a spot.

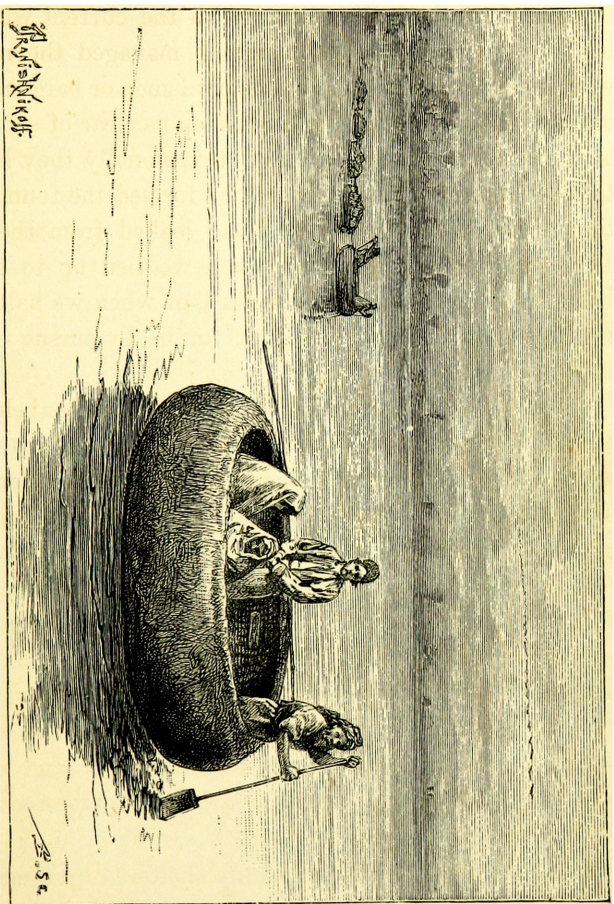
George Boyajan, when he arrived, was much pleased with the letter I had brought from Mardin. He said he did not much mind about the failure of his Nisibin correspondent to collect the wool; for if it did not come in one year, it would in another, and the profits were so great that a year's delay would not be of any great consequence. But when I commenced to abuse the Arabs and to praise the Kurds, he said that I must not judge of the two peoples by what I had seen of them. Though he had by large payments been able to secure the friendship of the Kurds, which was absolutely necessary in the trade carried on in the countries where they were the dominant race, yet they were only actuated, with rare exceptions, by motives of self-interest. The Arabs, on the other hand, though they were wild men of the desert, whose hand, like that of their forefather Ishmael, was against every man, and every man's hand against them, possessed a high idea of honour, and would never, even though it might be much to their profit, depart from their plighted word, or violate what they considered the sacred duties of hospitality.

At Mosul, Boyajan received from his agents a large amount of goods. He said that as I had had the rough of land travelling, I should now take to the kelluks; while he, hiring camels and pack animals, would proceed by land to Baghdad, on the east bank of the Tigris.

My voyage down this historic river was a new experience to me. We drifted with the current without labour or fatigue; the men who managed the raft with long poles, like those of the puntsmen or bargemen on the Thames, having only to keep us clear of shoals or the remains of ancient dams. Occasionally they had to blow up some of the skins which formed the foundation of our rafts when the air had leaked from them. This was usually performed when we tied up to the bank to light fires to cook our food, or when we halted for the night if it were too dark for us to pursue our voyage in safety.

Our first stoppage was at a town a few miles below Mosul, where are some baths to which the natives resort in the warm weather, and which are considered sovereign in all diseases of the skin, as well as being generally beneficial to health. I own that when I came to the dirty-looking, evil-smelling water, I did not, as I had intended, bathe in it, though all the guards of the kelluks and their crews plunged eagerly into it. The smell of the water seemed to be a compound of that of sulphur and of addled eggs. The surface was covered with a dirty, greasy-looking scum, and the water was sufficiently warm for a considerable amount of vapour to arise from it.

Close by these baths, which are sheltered by a mean and dirty building, are springs of naphtha and of mineral pitch. To one of the former my companions set fire for my amusement, and it blazed up to a height of



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twenty feet or more. From the latter they told me that the people of old times who built Babylon and Nineveh had taken pitch for mortar. If this be so, it must be the slime mentioned in Genesis xi. 3, where it is written: "They had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar." (Was this mineral pitch or bitumen?) As for some distance down the river after leaving this place the soil on the right bank is impregnated with pitch, the supply must have been almost inexhaustible. The only use now made of it is in the construction of the kufas, or round boats, which are used as ferries at several points on the river, and which are often large enough to contain two or three horses and their riders besides the ferrymen. These boats are made of palm branches worked into the shape of a basket; and they are then, like Moses' cradle, daubed thoroughly within and without with this pitch. They are exceedingly strong, light, and buoyant, and, notwithstanding their extraordinary shape, are easily managed.

Occasionally as we floated along we were startled by the appearance of parties of wandering Arabs; but the greatest harm we had from them was the fright their appearance caused. Sometimes they dismounted and called to us to come to them, and when we refused they fired their matchlocks at us. We were always fortunate enough, however, to be able to pass by safely on the other side of the stream. Sheltering ourselves behind the bales of which our cargo consisted, their

bullets only pierced a few of the skins that formed the foundation of our rafts, which the crews of the kelluks simply repaired by putting a stone on the holes and tying them tightly round.

Sometimes we halted at the villages, if they may be so called, of some Jebour Arabs, who, too poor to possess flocks and herds like their wandering brethren, have to till the ground, after a fashion, for their sustenance. Though these people are wretchedly poor, often having no other lodging than a hole dug in the ground and roofed with reeds, I found that the best they possessed was always brought out for us, and that their hospitality fully tallied with what Boyajan had told me.

At the town of Tekrit—famous as the place where the Romans, after the death of Julian the Apostate, recrossed the Tigris on their retreat, and Jovian, his successor, concluded a humiliating treaty with their enemies—we stopped for two days while the rafts were thoroughly overhauled. Here I often amused myself in practising swimming on an inflated skin, after the manner of the people, in the use of which they are very expert. Indeed, when a man, ay, or a woman, has to visit any place lying some way down the river, they throw themselves into the water and drift leisurely down; and when they return, they empty the skin of its air, and folding it up, carry it back with them to their homes.

Soon after leaving Tekrit we seemed to enter a new country. The cattle were different from any I had



SWIMMERS ON INFLATED SKINS.
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before seen, being small, and having a hump on the shoulder, like those I afterwards saw in India. Soon, too, palm trees became common, and rude means of irrigation were used.

Suddenly I saw before me two domes glittering in the sunlight.

"Are these domes in Baghdad?" I asked my companions.

They laughed and said, "What, art thou an Ajemi" (for I was still wearing a Persian cap), "and dost not know the shrine to which thy countrymen come to worship, and to which they bring the bodies of their dead to be buried?"

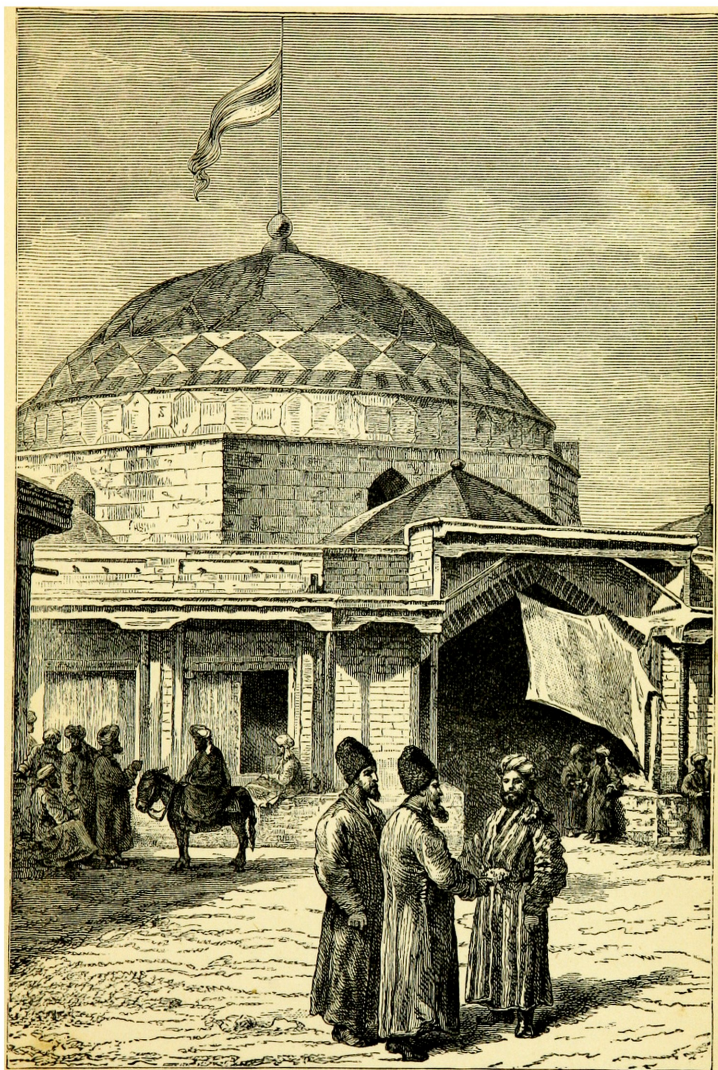
I was quite ignorant of what they meant. But as Boyajan had thought it better for me to be considered a Persian than a Frank, I concealed my want of knowledge, and said that when we arrived at the town I would land and see if I might meet any of my countrymen.

This was equally laughed at, and my companions said, "Listen to the heretic. Why, the Shiah dogs do not come here except in large numbers, and in the sacred month. Not another sheepskin cap will now be seen in Samara; so, if thou landest there, take off thy own, for in the days when no Persians are there the people would not regard the wearer of one as a friend. If thou wishest to see the mosques close at hand, dress thyself as an Arab, or as a dweller in Mosul, and we will take thee into the town."

At first I did not care much for this proposal; but as we drew nearer to the town, and I saw that these domes were covered with beautifully coloured tiles disposed in a peculiar pattern, my curiosity increased, and I assented to land and go up to the town dressed as my companions were. It was indeed fortunate that I had done this; for when we came close to the principal of the two mosques, I saw some Persians standing about in the open space in front of it, and if I had been dressed as they were, nothing could have prevented their discovering that I was not a countryman of theirs.

My companions said to me, "Why dost thou not embrace thy countrymen?" On the spur of the moment, in order to avoid the *rencontre*, I replied, "Why, it is fortunate that I am dressed even as you are, for these men are my enemies, and would compass my destruction." Knowing, from all I had heard, that any attempt on the part of a Frank to approach a sacred shrine would be certain to be punished with death if it were discovered, I hurried at once back to the rafts.

My companions, having completed some small purchases, soon followed me to the kelluks. They told me that the Persians we had seen were the forerunners of numbers more who would arrive in a few days. Some prophet or mollah had foretold that all who were buried in the neighbourhood of Samara during the sacred month of the Moslem year, which would commence with the next new moon, would be certain of entry into Paradise. Accordingly all Shiahs who could



MOSQUE IN SAMARA.

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afford it, all who could beg, borrow, or steal enough money to defray the cost, had packed up the dead bodies of their fathers, mothers, brothers, aunts, sisters, cousins—in short, of all their dead relations—and had set out by sea and land to bring them to Samara to bury them.

I congratulated myself on the chance which had brought us to Samara before the arrival of the main body of these pious pilgrims. My fellow-voyagers needed no urging to persuade them to leave what might become a dangerous place for all of us, and we were soon again drifting down the river.

Cultivation now became more common, and soon we saw the first of those wondrous canals which were constructed in the days of the great kings of Assyria, and by some of which communication is even yet possible between the sister streams of the Euphrates and Tigris, but of which the greater portion have now fallen into disrepair. Nor was there lack of more modern ruins, prominent among which were those of Eski Baghdad, or Old Baghdad, where was a tower higher even than the Cathedral so marvellously designed and built by Sir Christopher Wren, which we in our day have seen arise in our midst in the fair city of London. Round this tower wound a spiral road, by which, my companions told me, the horsemen of Haroun al Raschid used to mount to its summit to keep a watch over all who might approach the city.

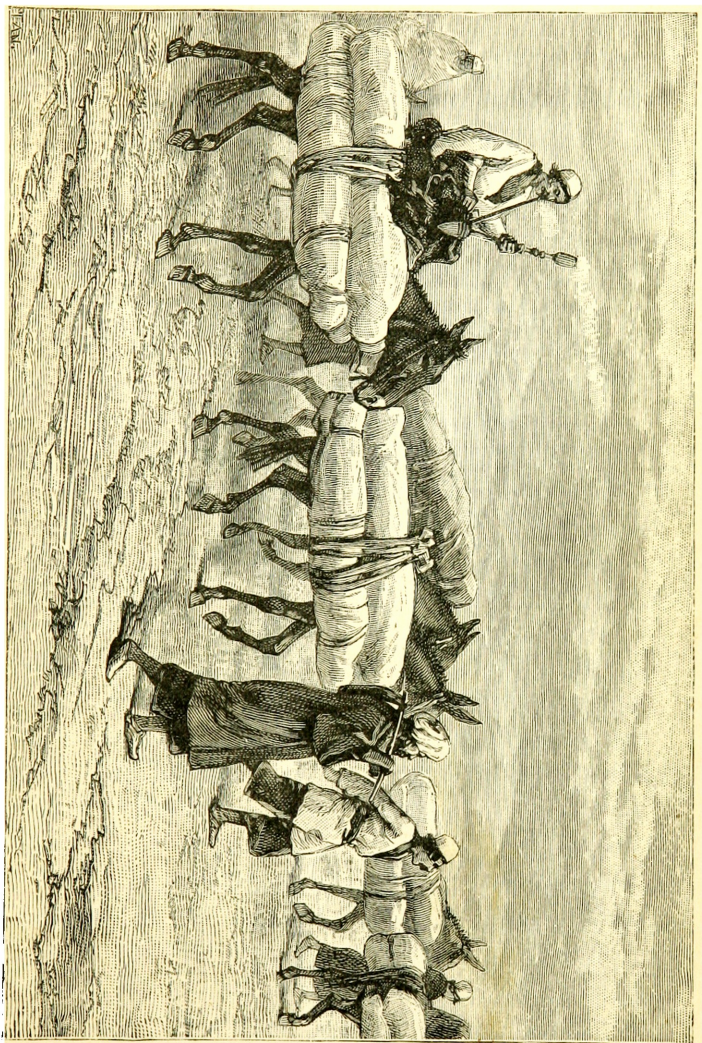
As we drifted down, we at times saw parties of the

Shiah pilgrims. Occasionally some special display marked out where the corpse of some man of wealth or rank was being carried to its last resting-place; but the majority were slung like panniers on each side of a mule, while perched on the top was the living Persian, who, according to his religious belief, was insuring the everlasting bliss of his departed loved ones by carrying their remains to Samara for interment.

At last, amid groves of palms I saw some mosques and minarets. Here, in a tomb of marvellous beauty, I was told, reposed the remains of the Sitti Zobeide, the famed and lovely spouse of the great caliph Haroun al Raschid, who, for fame, wisdom, and greatness, is considered by all Orientals to be only second to Solomon, the son of David.

Soon after we had passed the tomb of Zobeide we arrived in the city of Baghdad. We landed just above the bridge of boats across the Tigris which affords a means of communication between the two parts of the town, and my voyage on a *kelluk* came to an end. It had not been without its pleasures, nor yet without its risks. The only thing I regretted was my ignorance of the ancient history of the places I had passed, which prevented me from knowing something of those who had planned and built them, as well as of those who had made the wonderful canals between the Euphrates and the Tigris.

The men who had navigated our *kelluks* now sold



SHIAH PILGRIMS ON THEIR WAY TO SAMARRA.

the wood composing their framework, and with the proceeds bought camels and donkeys. On these animals they loaded the skins that had given the rafts buoyancy, and at once prepared to return to their homes, there to reconstruct their kelluks and again descend the river.

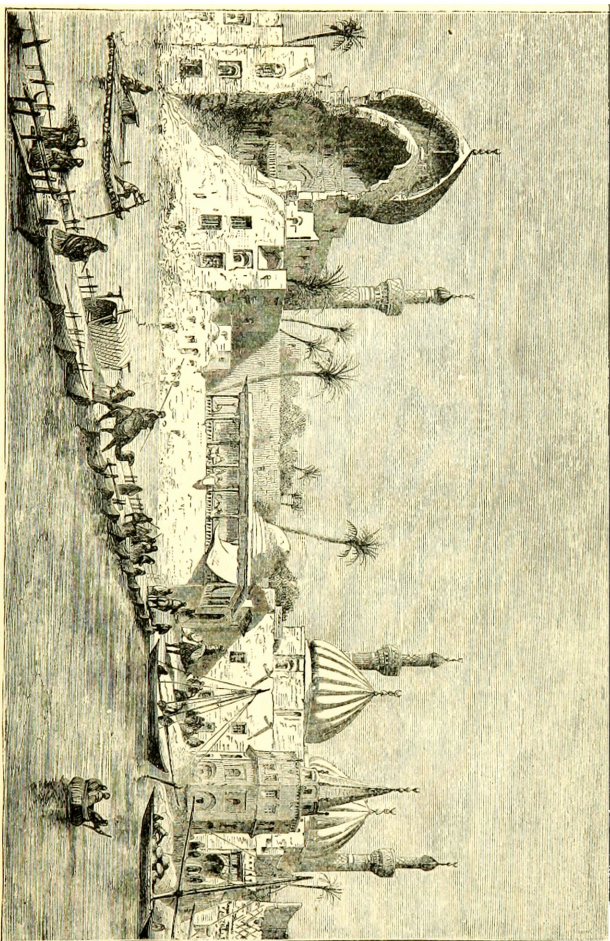
CHAPTER XIX.

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME.

NEWS of our arrival in Baghdad soon spread through the town ; and I was still employed in seeing our merchandise landed, when I saw two men in Frankish dress coming towards me. They called out in Arabic and asked if the kelluks were those of Boyajan, and where he himself was. I hurried towards them, and to my intense joy I heard, as I drew near, that they were speaking in English. As may be imagined, I lost no time in telling them that I was their countryman.

My welcome from these two gentlemen, Mr. Lawson and Mr. Oliver, was warm indeed. They hurried me away with them to their lodgings before they would permit me to tell my story, or would say more about themselves than that they belonged to the English factory at Bassorah, and had come up thence to meet Boyajan.

As soon as we reached their house they called for their servants, and I was presently shaved, and dressed



BRIDGE OF BOATS AT BAGHDAD. - -

in clean white clothes belonging to my hosts. I was then entertained by them at dinner, at which were present a brother of Boyajan and some Dutch merchants who were trading in Baghdad. As soon as the dishes were removed I was asked to give them a recital of my various sufferings and adventures. They were deeply affected by my story, and promised that by the first opportunity I should leave Bassorah for Bombaim, and that they would defray the costs of my passage to that place, besides making me a handsome payment for the services which I had rendered to their agent, George Boyajan. They promised also to give me a letter to the chief factor at Bombaim, recommending that I should be sent to England in the next fleet.

I was overjoyed at my reception and the kindness shown me, and spent the fortnight or three weeks which elapsed before the arrival of Boyajan with the goods he was bringing by land in riding about the neighbourhood with my hosts and visiting some of the houses of the richer inhabitants. These houses exceeded in splendour anything I had ever seen, some of the rooms being lined all over, walls and ceilings, with mirrors, which, when the rooms were lighted up, had a most marvellous and dazzling appearance. At the time I was in Baghdad the temperature was not unpleasantly warm; but I was told that during the summer months the heat is almost unendurable, and that then the inhabitants live during the daytime in cellars lined with marble slabs which are kept con-

stantly wet, and at sunset resort to the roofs to enjoy the breezes from the desert. But nothing in the town of Baghdad struck me so much as the strange variety of people that were to be seen in the bazaars. There were Turks, Armenians, Jews, Arabs, Hindus, and merchants from Western Europe, all busily engaged in trade, and wearing the dresses of their respective nations; even in Constantinople I had seen nothing to compare with the numbers and the variety of people I saw here. There were also to be seen processions of Arab chiefs coming in to see the governor; dervishes begging and praying; the harems of some of the rich inhabitants going visiting, carried in litters or mounted on asses, and jealously guarded by eunuchs and negro slaves fantastically and richly dressed. Indeed, not a day passed that I did not come across some new, strange, or pleasing sight.

At last Boyajan arrived; and two days afterwards Messrs. Lawson and Oliver hired a boat and, taking Boyajan and me with them, proceeded down the river to Bassorah. We passed on the way the marvellous ruins of Ctesiphon, called by the people Tak-i-Khosro, in the centre of which was the most noble arch on which I had ever set eyes. At the confluence of the Tigris and the Euphrates my companions pointed out to me the traditional site of the Garden of Eden.

Soon after we arrived at Bassorah. Here we found that a vessel from Bombaim had just arrived, on board which the goods collected by my friend Boyajan and

those at the factory were to be shipped, and in which I myself took a passage.

My journeys and wanderings were now at an end. I parted from Boyajan, who had indeed been a true and kind friend to me, and from my newer friends, Messrs. Lawson and Oliver, with a feeling of regret that was somewhat mitigated by the hope that in less than a year I would be again among my own people, who must have long since abandoned all hope of ever again seeing me in this life.

I have little more to tell. At Bombaim I found the fleet about to sail for England, and there being a vacancy for third mate on board the *Gloucester*, it was given to me. During the voyage to England, I had the good fortune to commend myself to the favourable consideration of the captain by my attention to my duties, and especially by my conduct during a desperate action that we fought when separated from our consorts with two pirate ships off the island of Madagascar, which we were fortunate enough to beat off with severe loss; so that when we arrived in England I was confirmed in my position as mate.

At length we anchored off Gravesend, and the captain gave me permission to leave the ship. Taking a wherry, I hastened up the river to Wapping. It was evening when I landed, and I ran rather than walked towards my father's shop, my heart a prey to varying emotions. Would God, who had protected me through so many trials, have watched over and cared for the

dear ones I had left behind? As I arrived under the familiar sign of the *Happy Return* I paused, almost afraid to enter; but plucking up courage, I went in, and was soon in my mother's arms.

I must now take farewell of my readers. Perhaps some day, if their verdict on this true and simple history is favourable, I may tell them some of the various strange adventures that have fallen to my lot during my many voyages to the East Indies, which, I think, may prove entertaining to those who have not had the opportunity of visiting strange and distant lands.

THE END.

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